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#### CANADA AND IT'S LITERATURE

No Country is Greater than the Measure of its Loyalty to its Citizens, its Talents, its Ideals.



HEN recently, Norman Duncan, the foremost Short Story Writer Canada has produced, was so fittingly and successfully remembered with a

Jubilee Celebration by our Canadian Literature Club, it was painfully apparent how little Canadians knew of their famous countryman, who, through his wonderful stories of the Newfoundland and Labrador coasts, deservedly ranks with Kipling and Conrad. Intensely Canadian, he wrote true Canadian stories; but not appreciated at home, it remained for American publishers to recognize the merits of his work, and American magazines to give it to the world.

Recently there passed from our midst another famous Canadian author, our much lauded Marjorie Pickthall. Does it do credit to Canada that the legacy of her latest work should appear solely in American Magazines? Red Book, June 1922 issue says: "Marjorie L. C. Pickthall is distinctly the find of 1922, as you who have read 'White Magic,' 'The Fighters,' and 'The Stove' will agree."

Shall the glory of discovering this Canadian literary genuis go to our American friends? Shall our future generation of fictionists rise without our fostering care and gather their laurels abroad without our concern? Shall they lose faith in us because we lack faith in them?

Let us Believe in Canada Because Canada is Good Enough to Believe in.



N every other field of endeavor, Canada has proven herself the equal of the best, and she is no exception in the field of literature. Eminent

writers have graduated from Canada. Equally promising writers are now in Canada. Why have we not seen more of their literary product? Why have they been forced to seek foreign markets, to conform to foreign standards and to cater to foreign sentiment, when a truly Canadian standard could be established, and a truly Canadian sentiment expressed?

Let us keep Canadian fiction within our borders—

Let us develop in Canada a real literature—

Let us foster and encourage—

Let us be patient and loyal—

Let us discover, and wait—

A S readers of The Quill you are, indeed, giving tangible evidence of your loyal support of Canadian writers and Canadian literature, and we desire to register our deep gratitude for the laudable manner in which you have risen to the call of Canada's first and only all-fiction magazine.

Robert. W Magee



#### FROM THE EDITOR



ECENTLY a manuscript was sent to me by a woman writer whose name frequently appears in some of the prominent Canadian and

American magazines, and accompanying it was a note to the effect that the enclosed story, though not specifically Canadian, could very easily be made so by substituting the word Montreal or Toronto for the word Boston wherever the latter occurred in the narrative.

I would like to have you, the first readers of The Quill, carefully re-read the above sentiment and then think it over. Is that the way Canadian stories are written? Is that the way to develop a true Canadian literature the necessity for and the support of which is so insistently impressed upon us?

We hear a great deal about Canadian literature, but in the strict sense of the term there is very little of it. Some poetry is distinctively Canadian, a few novels and a handful of short stories. The mere fact that a Canadian city is named in a story or that its author is of Canadian birth does not make the composition itself Canadian. I believe there is a national spirit which animates our body politic, a sense of nationality that is the direct outgrowth of an environment and manner of living, in certain fundamental essentials totally unlike any other environment on earth, and that it makes true Canadians different from all other people both collectively and individually. These points of difference are, of course, visible only to close observers; they cannot be displayed in national exhibitions, nor featured in daily newspapers. They cannot be defined and analyzed by even those super-beings the psychologists of modern business. But they exist and they can be understood and interpreted by means of the only divine faculty possessed by man - the imagination of the artist.

Any writer, worthy the name, is capable of observing and interpreting the life around him in such manner as to make that life understood by his readers

as a phase of life distinct, individual, and peculiar to the particular environment which serves as the scene of his story. And not only the scene of his story, but the characters of his story should be the inevitable outgrowth of environment. Try substituting the names of New England towns for those of French Canadian villages in some of Gilbert Parker's stories. Would that make them American? No, it would only make them ridiculous. Try to adapt one of Norman Duncan's stories of Newfoundland to British Columbia and see how impossible it is to separate a real work of art from the soil of its nativity.

The Quill is here primarily for the purpose of presenting to the public the work of new Canadian writers. Those who have already arrived have, for the most part, found a market across the border and they have had to adapt their work to their market. It is a lamentable fact that the substitution of one city's name for another is usually all that is needed nowadays to make what is commonly supposed to be a Canadian story.

The first few numbers of The Quill may contain some stories of that kind—simply because few real Canadian stories are being written. But The Quill is here for a purpose and in the fulfillment of that purpose one of its main endeavors will be the discovery of new writters and the development of a true Canadian literature.

In the light of what I have said, I ask you to carefully examine the stories in this magazine. They were written mostly by authors of whom you have not heard. May I ask you as reader—the ultimate judge—to write and let me know your opinion of these stories. Which do you like best—which least—and why?

A frank expression of your honest opinion will be of inestimable value to me as Editor. I expect to hear from you all.

J. albert Wallary



#### The Realm of Romance

By LILLIAN LEVERIDGE

I glimpsed a lovely land serene and fair,
All softly wreathed and veiled in shining mist,
That here revealed a dawn-blue mountain-stair
And there a sunset vale of amethyst.
'Twas mine own country! Undiscovered yet
Its verdant fields of romance, blossom-set!

Though summer's glory waned, throughout the land
There floated far a sound of singing birds—
Strange notes and sweet, I could not understand;
Dream-melodies, they seemed, of golden words.
I listened, wrapt in wonderment—and then
I knew the singing birds for living men.

Young poets, full of ardour and of joy,
Young story-tellers, spinners in the sun,
In shining webs of words your powers employ;
Bring here your magic tapestries, dream-spun.
Undoubting pass the wide-flung welcome-gates,
Where hushed, expectant, vast, your audience waits.

Bring here your visions of immortal youth,
Your thoughts profound, your fancies light of wing.
In bubbling wells of laughter, joy and truth,
In dreams of every dear, delightful thing,
In love and light, dip deep your golden quill.
Here for your words we wait with hearts athrill.



## The Dream Artist

#### By NINA MARGARET MATHISON

Music - Love - and a little flower shop are here charmingly woven into a story that will tug at the heart strings.



SY IKE a bit of Romance in a world of ugly reality the little Garden Flower Shop stood out in vivid contrast to the prosaic plainness of a typical prairie town. As re-

freshing as an oasis in a desert, as welcome as a light in darkness, as cheering as a friendly face in a strange land, it lifted its fragrant beauty in brave protest to the sombre prac-

ticality of a work-a-day world.

Now that Spring was well on her way, violets took the place of carnations in the window; daffodils lifted their graceful heads where roses had held sway; sweet peas, narcissi, primroses and tulips nodded each to each in friendly recognition of the other's worth and the

common purpose which they served.

Adjoining the little shop was a tiny livingroom where a cosy fire burned in the grate, its light playing upon the faces of a man and a young girl sitting in the semi-darkness. The man, whose eyes had lost forever the power of seeing, sat dreamily caressing a violin, holding it in silence as one holds a loved form, while the girl sat on the arm of his chair gently stroking his hair. Beautiful hair it was, brown and soft and waving.

"You see, there was nothing else to do," said the man closing a pause which had lasted

many minutes.

"But, Daddy, how can you bear to leave the Flower Shop? I thought-it was-every-

thing to you," said the girl gently.

"No, Elda. Not more to me than you. You must have your chance. We'll go east and take a couple of rooms and you shall go to one of the masters and let him teach you. All day you shall play and study and one day you shall take up your violin and lo, it will not be the violin singing any longer; it will be your own soul. And then we shall come back and buy The Flower Shop again."

"Daddy! You haven't sold it!" cried the

"It's as good as sold. The papers are not drawn up but-"

"To whom?"

"The owners of the Apollo Restaurant will .... " The man passed a trembling hand over his eyes as if a pain had suddenly shot through them. "Where's my cane, Elda?"

He rose slowly and felt his way to the

window. Passing his hand ever so gently over the flowers, starting at the stem, he traced the leaves one by one and then named the flower as he touched its petals. Something in them seemed to respond to his touch and to reach out to him in a helplessness not unlike his own. They were friends. Their souls touched in silence and the thought of separation was unbearable to both.

"If it wasn't for the picture—" The words were half whispered. "I can leave the other

things."

"What picture, Daddy?" Elda was at his

side instantly.

"Oh, I forgot you were here, Elda. It'snothing. Just a picture I've been trying to paint for ten years and I've hardly a start made yet. But listen. Isn't there someone outside?" He had an air of always listening.

"Just a couple of cowboys, Daddy Dave. Can't you see the red handkerchiefs around their necks, their sombreros and khaki suits?" The girl had long grown accustomed to being eyes for the man whose hunger for news of the outside world was fed only by her simple observations and discriptions. "Their pockets are just bulging with money; been selling cattle, I suppose, and they're on their way to Billy Donahue's to spend the night in drinking and gambling. In the morning they'll not have a cent. Isn't it terrible! They are so big and have such dear, sweet faces!"

"Cowboys with dear, sweet faces!" The man smiled. "What a girl you are! But what

is it they are saving?"

Elda drew the man back into the shadows behind the ferns and palms which made a screen from the street. The light in the window gave her a chance to see plainly the faces of the men who had stopped to look at the flowers.

"I say, Jim, what a jolly little flower shop! Sure looks out of place, though, in this Godforsaken country. People come out here to make money, not to look at flowers." The boy turned to his companions with a careless laugh.

"Haven't you seen this shop before, Dick? Didn't you ever hear about the blind fool that

keeps it?"

"No. What blind fool?"



"Oh. I don't know what his name is, but he came here and built a sort of store-bungalow, fixed up the grounds with trees and grass, set up a fountain in the middle of the yard with flowers all round it, put rustic seats under the trees, even hung bird-houses from the branches. Instead of Keep off the Grass' signs he put up little boards with 'Welcome' on them. Cut flowers are shipped in every day from the city which he practically gives away, they say. He has a perfectly ripping girl to run the store, daughter or niece or something like that, and they both play violins. Give sort of band concerts in the evenings when the village people sit around under the trees and listen."

"Well, I swan! And him blind! He must

be batty!"

"Yes, they say he's not all there. Seems he was a-a-what d'you call those idiots who paint pictures-artists, yes, artist, and lost his sight and he's never been quite right in the upper story since. He still thinks he's painting pictures." A hearty laugh followed these remarks.

The girl who had been trying to draw the blind man away, now caught his arm implor-

ingly.

"Come, dearest. Don't listen any more." "Just a moment, Elda. One moment."

"Say, by the blazes, Jim, there's an English primrose. My God, Jim, I haven't seen one since I was a kid. Looks just like home. And daffodils! Gee! But say, you should've seen the ones mother used to grow in her garden. These aren't in the same class with hers. I can see them down by the garden wall, great yellow-"

"Oh, give over, you idiot. Forget 'em. Come on. Billy Donahue's got something that'll make you forget your mother's daffodils."

"But I can't forget-to-night. I don't want to forget. Say, the old folks, Jim. I wonder . . . . I haven't written-"

WELL, I'm off, you blubbering baby. Coming?"

"Not to-night, Jim. I'm going to see how much those daffodils are. I'd like one to put in my buttonhole. And I'm going to write a letter." He took a roll of bills from his pocket and looked at them. "I'm going to put something in it that'll make the old folks wipe their specs to make sure they're seeing straight . . . . If it's not too late."

When they had passed on, the blind man caught the girl's hand to steady himself.

"Elda, tell me, child, how did they look?

What were their faces like?"

"They changed, Daddy. At first they were laughing. Sort of a devil-may-care look in their eyes. And then something seemed to melt in them. They grew soft and-home sick."

"O little one, what a picture to have paint-I used to think that the greatest thing in life was to paint on canvas. And when the darkness came and wrenched the brushes from my unwilling fingers. I cursed God and man. I said, 'If I cannot paint, I cannot live.' child. I didn't know what it meant to live. What is daubing on canvas compared to coloring emotions in people's souls!"

She drew him gently to a chair before the

grate.

"But, Daddy, they were unkind. said vou-"

"Oh, I suppose that's the way it looks to

those who do not understand."

"But why do we do this? The store doesn't pay. We are always spending more for flowers than we receive."

"No, it doesn't pay. That's true. Oh, it's been just a notion of mine, dear, just-devotion to a-a dream."

"A dream?"

"Yes, just a dream." He hesitated as if wondering whether to go on. "I loved a beautiful girl once." He brushed his hand over his eyes again as if the pain had passed through them.

"Did she d-?"

"No, not that, dear. She was married when I met her. She had her baby with her."

"Oh!" The girl drew a long sigh of disappointment. "How did you know, then?"

"Know, dear? Know that I loved her? How does the flower know that the sun is shining? It just unfolds. It grows. It opens up its soul to the sun. It can't help it. We met one summer-well, it happened to be down here at Billy Donahue's. There was quite a number of summer tourists there. I had smuggled some paints along. I was forever daubing. Bits of landscape, moonlight scenes and so on. But father was bound to make a merchant of me. He hated my pictures. So I had to do them on the sly. I always thought I could paint if I had a chance, but I never knew till I met-Her that I could be a great artist. When she came into my life, something seemed to open toward the light and I knew father's dream for me would have to give place to a greater."

"Did she-know?"

"Soon she was gone. But the inspiration, the dream remained. When the night came on,"-he drew his hand across his forehead-"when my hands grew numb, I lost it for awhile. But gradually in the darkness it took shape again, the feeling that I must do something, make something beautiful to be worthy of the love which I had found. One night I



dreamed that she came back, came back and looked over my shoulder as she did that summer, to see my picture. And there's so little to see. I've been trying to put a little beauty into lives which otherwise would miss it altogether, but I fear there is not much to see. O, Elda, if,"—he reached out and grasped the girl's hand—"If she should come back! I might have made a masterpiece if—" He buried his face in his hands. "Is that someone coming?"

He seemed always to be listening for a step

which never came.

"It's just Harry, Daddy. May I go out with him for a little walk? Can you do with-

out me?"

"Yes, certainly, dear. I can call Hannah if I need anything." He reached out his hand with an imploring gesture. "Something moves me to-night, Elda. Perhaps—oh, no doubt it is our talk but it seems as if my dream was—coming true. I shall sit in the garden till you return."

IN his darkened world David Morgan was still an artist. Deprived himself of the sight of beauty, he realied with intensified keenness how hearts pine and starve for it, and he sought to stay for others the craving which in himself could know no appeasement. To some, the human element of this treeless, flowerless prairie town was composed of people trying to make a living. To him it meant a stretch of colorless grey canvas waiting for the touch of an artist hand to sketch in colorings of immortal beauty. He saw men and women from many lands making their fight with life in a new world deprived of the softening touch of old associations and memories, wearing rough and hard exteriors to show that they had no hearts, when it required only the sight of a bit of beauty, the fragrant remembrance of a childhood's flower, the familiar melody of an old-fashioned tune to set in vibration emotions which in intensity and depth revealed the fact that the outward mask which hearts wear is but very thin after all.

He little dreamed of the far-reaching effects of his endeavors. It is true he knew that little crippled Dora smiled when she saw the Flower-man's lovely carnations on the rickety table beside her bed; Elda had told him that much. But he did not know that night and morning after thanking God for the flowers she prayed, "And please, Jesus, make me pure and sweet like they are." He did not know that her mother, shuffling into the room from bending over the eternal wash tub, felt the ache in her back ease up a bit and the weariness slip ever so slightly from her sagging shoulders when her eyes rested on his gift, the only bit of color in the room. He knew that

little Angelo Carpeneto, from the fruit shop down the street where her father and mother sold bananas and onions and longed for sunny Italy, loved to take home a bunch of white lilies in her hand. But he did not know that to the little brown-skinned girl his lilies were white-faced, muslin-gowned playmates, miniature reproductions of the kind she longed to play with on the street but who pushed her out of their games and forced her to sit always on her doorstep alone. He did not know that through him the child was no longer alone, but that clothed with her simple fancies, the flowers were little dream-girls who did not resent her friendliness and that through him she was learning her first lesson in happiness, the art of taking the Here and Now and weaving into them the golden thread of Romance, thereby transforming the meanest materials into fabrics of everlasting beauty and delight. He knew that people liked to hear him play but he did not know that after listening to him they went back to their homes with renewed courage to take up their appointed tasks, with fresh hopes for the future and with increased faith in God and man.

He only knew that deep down in his heart he held a dream and that through devotion to

it he was finding happiness.

When Elda and her lover drew near the Flower Shop an hour later the girl suddenly caught her companion's arm.

"Hush!" she whispered.

Coming out of the darkness a cry had arisen, sharp and piercing. The two stood motionless for a moment and then, taking a step or two, they descried through the shadows the forms of men and women under the trees, the townspeople who had gathered at the first sounds of the music to hear the old songs, the melodies they loved the best. Annie Laurie, Flow Gently Sweet Afton, Robin Adair, The Last Rose of Summer, had stirred soft and tender memories in their breasts. And then there had been a silence after which, just as the lovers drew near, the violin had become a living thing and uttered a human cry.

It was a sob as of some wild, hurt thing wrenched with a great pang like the pang of death or birth. It quivered for a moment and then lost itself in the silence from which it had risen. And then, after a pause, another sound, soft and melodious, trembled into being. There was no distress in it. The bitterness was gone. With its accustomed sweetness and purity of tone the violin poured out its soul and the listeners waited breathless with

emotion till it should cease.

To the girl listening, suddenly a great revelation was made. She heard in the first cry the lonliness of the man's soul when life's great disappointment had bowed him in the



dust. She read in it the ache of longing, the delirium of love, the pain of separation, the agony of loss, and then she saw, creeping into it. softening it. beautifying it. hallowing it ... the light of his dream.

The music rose, fell gently and rose again,

ever higher, slowly increasing in volume and power until it ended in an overwhelming burst of victory in which faith and hope towered triumphant and glorious in a majestic climax.

"Harry," said the girl in a whisper, "when I can play like that I shall have the world at

my feet."

The boy bent his head close. He had become saddened by the thought of separation. He felt the wistfulness in her tone. He caught her fiercely.

"Would you rather have the world at your feet," he whispered hoarsely, "than-love?"

"Oh, come. We must go," she cried. "The townspeople are leaving. See, they come silently and in line as if they were coming out of church."

"They are," Harry replied. "But who are those strangers? The woman is sobbing."

"It was wonderful, Daddy Dave, the music," said Elda as she finished putting the shop in order for the night and sat down at the man's feet in front of the grate, taking his hand in hers. "Why is it they would rather listen to you than me?"

"Tut, child. It is not so. They laugh when you play. They clap their hands. They are happy. When I play they are silent.

Sometimes they sob."

"Yes, there was a stranger to-night . . ." A knock at the door startled them both. The man rose quickly to his feet.

"What is it, Elda?" His voice was unsteady.

"A message," she answered as she admitted a small boy and took a note from his hand. "It is signed, 'Madame Celeste.' Oh, the concert singer who is singing in the theatre tonight! From New York, you know. Her accompanist has met with an accident and cannot be with her. She heard the music in the garden to-night and wonders if the player could possibly help her out. She's at Billy Donahue's now and the concert is due to commence in fifteen minutes."

The girl turned an excited face to the man. "Madame Celeste!" he was saying. wonder who she is. If I could only-" put his hand over his eyes. "But I know!" he cried excitedly. "You can go, Elda. It may be your chance. You'll do it?"

The girl's face flushed with pleasure.

"But you will come too, Daddy Dave. It's so long since you've heard a great artist."

Elda hurriedly changed her dress and was about to start when she was called to the door

by an old woman with a plaid shawl over her head.

"O Daddy Dave! Mrs. Jacobs is here. She says little Dora's worse. The pain is so bad she can't sleep-"

"And she keeps acallin' for you, Mister Morgan." The woman pulled her red shawl closer and advanced toward the man in the doorway. "The doctor says she can't get better this time, an' she wants to hear the little fairies dancin' on the green, she says."

"And I tell her you can't go, that you're

going to the concert, Daddy Dave."

"Hush, Elda, dear. Get my violin. Yes, Mrs. Jacobs, I'll come right along. Why didn't vou tell me sooner? Poor little Dora! Elda, a few daffodils from the window please! The largest ones you can find. It's a chance," he added in a whisper to Elda as she reluctantly obeyed him, "to add a little to the picture. I'll not have many more, you know."

A FTER little Dora had been sulled to sleep by the fairy music of his violin, David Morgan put on his coat, picked up his cane and his beloved instrument and started for home.

It was not an uncommon sight to see the blind man taking a solitary walk on the streets at night. He found solace in the silent darkness. At first the townspeople had feared when they saw that lonely figure feeling its way cautiously along the curbstones in the twilight. They were anxious for his safety. That forgot that daylight and darkness were alike to him. But as time went on and no harm befell him, they ceased to be alarmed. They took it as a matter of course. In the daytime he was never alone. The children caught his arm, they hung on his coat, they begged for stories, of which he always carried an abundant supply. But at night no one intruded on his privacy. He wanted it so. Something in the great, brooding stillness soothed his spirit and brought peace to his lonely heart.

When he left the home of Mrs. Jacobs, some inner restlessness, some strange, indefinable sensation which in highly sensitive natures so often precedes some unusual occurrence, kept him from going straight home. He attributed the feeling to the change which he was anticipating in his life. He pictured his beloved Flower Shop turned into an eating house where men and women would go to have their bodies fed instead of their souls. He wondered who would look after the souls of the people he loved so well, the Dora's and the Angela's, the careless comboys and the women whose wistful voices made him imagine what their faces were like and their grey, monotonous lives. As he drew near the street



which led to the theatre, he thought of Elda. What a momentous occasion it was for her! To be playing for a prima donna! Perhaps—

Suddenly, as he turned the corner, his cane was knocked from his hand and he barely escaped falling when a small figure dashed headlong into his arms. A pair of eager hands clutched him round the legs.

"Why Angela, Angela, is it you, child?

What are you doing here alone?"

"O Mr. Flower Man, I see you come. I listen outside." She pointed to the theatre. "Come, oh, come!"

"Come? Is anything-"

"No. no. Grand lady sing . . . . lika you play. She puts words on your music . . . . I wanta you hear . . . . . It make you cry inside. Lis'n!"

The door had opened for an instant and a strain of an old-fashioned song rang out rich and sweet. The man stood still for an instant. Then raising his arms in an overpowering emotion, he cried:

"My God! It's —Her voice! Miriam!"
Throwing precaution to the winds, unconscious of possible harm or danger, he started to run across the street.

From the open door had emerged a stalwart figure which was now swaying and staggering from one side of the walk to the other. He wore an olive-drab suit, a red handkerchief tied about his throat, a wide sombrero on his head. In the lapel of his coat was a withered daffodil.

"Thath the b-beth singin' I ever heard," he muttered, "'cept my old mother. She uthed to sing all 'em tunes. If I hadn't sent her all my money I'd buy an armful o' daffodils and th-throw 'em for the lady to walk on as she come out o' the d-door. Gee! That last one g-got me. When she come to Home, S-sweet Home, I says 'Dick, old boy, it's time you got out.' So here I be." He took out his handkerchief and began to wipe the tears from his eyes.

The blind man in his feverish haste, unconscious of the big form lurching unsteadily across his path, ran into it with such force that the cowboy was compelled to catch hold of a lamp post and David Morgan was sent reeling to the pavement striking his head on the curb. Little Angela uttered a shrill cry which brought the intoxicated man to his senses.

"What the—," he exclaimed, turning and bending with difficulty over the prostrate

"Oh, the Flower-man, the Flower-man!" cried Angela. "You've killed him! You bad, bad man!"

"No tthe blind man that keeps the flower store?" cried the fellow becoming more elert.

"I'd rather killed any other man in the world than him. Run for a doctor, kid. Run, I say!"

All the next morning Angela insisted on standing inside the Flower Shop.

"He keeps talking in his delirium about her, her," Elda was saying. "And I've no idea whom he can mean."

"For heaven's sake, think!" urged the doctor. "His life depends on it."

"He says he must hear her sing. It can't be that he was disappointed about the concert. He couldn't possibly mean—"

The little Italian girl was off like a shot. In a short time she returned leading Madame Celeste by the hand.

In answer to Elda's enquiring look Madame Celeste explained the insistency of the child that she must come, that she would make the Flower-man better.

Elda led her into the room where in broken tones the sufferer was murmuring, "Her voice."

Madame Celeste found her way to the bed and after one long, searching look, laid her hand softly over the sightless eyes and spoke.

"David! David!" she whispered. "Miriam's come!"

A convulsive shudder ran through the man's frame and suddenly he became calm.

When he spoke after what seemed to be an interminably long period, he was conscious.

"Elda," he called, "Are you there? I had the strangest dream. It must have been our talk this evening—or was it last evening . . . something seems wrong with my head. But I dreamed I heard Her singing. And she came—"

With this he fell asleep.

Afraid to move lest she disturb his slumber, Madame Celeste sat through the long hours till he awoke. Then she took his hand very gently in hers.

"David," she said softly. "It was not a dream. It's Miriam. Don't you..."

"Miriam!" cried the man trying to raise his hand to her face. "Am I losing my reason?"

She pressed his face to her bosom.

"No, no," she soothed. "All the years I've waited for this moment. Nothing shall separate us again."

He seemed to grow weaker.

"I've had wonderful dreams," he murmured. "But this surpasses them all." And then as if his mind was not quite clear—"The picture, the picture! I've just filled in the background . . . And now . . . together . . . the masterpiece! Elda! . . . the masterpiece!"



## Of Common Type

By STANLEY E. GLADWELL

Sacrifice—Faith—Age—Youth—and Love combine to give this drama of rural French Canadian Life a strong appeal.



HE stood before the farmhouse door shading her eyes with wrinkled hand from the westering sun. Of common type—decidedly so.

Bent back and scant grey locks, blown about the aged face by the fresh wind, spoke of experience, but nothing of experience beside the common joys and woes of human life. She was stained of the soil; of the earth, earthy—grimy hands and black-rimmed nails and rough clothing soiled and darned, and even the kindly sun could make nothing attractive of her snub nose and loose mouth. Oh yes! she was common enough—

Before her a huge black bull pawed the snowy yard impatiently, watching her with crafty eyes as one who would say, "Afraid of

me, yes?"

She was. She looked again over the distant hill top fringed with blueblack cedars against the jade and amber sky, where the narrow bush road dropped into the depression in which the farm lay. Across the valley the mauve shadows flitted between the maples, and the dying sun dropped scarlet stains upon the little hillocks.

"You wait until my boy comes—you," she muttered at the bull, and turned and hobbled within, leaving the door open behind her. A long grey cloak flapped around her ankles and her nailed boots went clickety clack on the bare boards of the floor. She bent to poke the stove and to warm her hands, pausing every few seconds to listen, crossing once or twice to the door to look out. "You wait until my boy comes—you."

Presently he came. A cracking of the whip and a rush of steaming horses and the sleigh drew up in the yard. She hastened to meet him, to take the horses to the stable,

which was her accustomed task.

Young Leduc jumped to the ground and

threw the lines to his mother.

"What's Billy doing here, mother?" he asked, loosening the traces so that the horses were free from their load. He spoke English—his mother's tongue and their usual speech since the father had died. Strangely like his mother to look at as to snub nose and loose mouth, but with black eyes to her grey, and very dark hair.

"Oh, Ben! I let him out to drink and he

wouldn't go back. I was afraid of him—"
"Afraid eh?" He finished looping the

"Afraid eh?" He finished looping the harness from the sleigh and gave the nearest horse a smack which started it on the way to the stable. "You might open the door to the cow shed as you pass," he called after his mother who was following the beasts across the yard slowly. "Milked, I suppose?"

"Oh, yes!"

Ben took up his heavy whip and advanced upon the bull which, however, regarded him warily but did not move.

"Get in with you!" yelled Ben.

The bull started to move away from the

outbuildings.

"Get in with you!" shouted Ben again, springing in front of the beast and flourishing his weapon. The buil stopped, looked at the whip anxiously for a moment, then began to trot obediently into the cow stable.

"Nothing to be afraid of!" said Ben as he strode by his mother on the way to the house.

"No—no!" she replied, "only he's getting frisky and I ain't as nimble as I might be, Ben!" She went again to the horse stable with a bundle of hay, then, bolting the door, followed her son into the house.

He was seated by the stove removing his boots. She placed a pair of dry socks near to his hand on the floor, and turned her attention to the supper on the stove. The table was already set for two.

"Hard day, Ben?"

He only grunted in reply.

"Roads soon be too soft for hauling!" she said a few minutes later, stooping to light a paper spill at the fire with which she set the candle on the table aflame.

He was drying his face on the rough towel behind the door and only muttered in reply.

"Fourteen eggs to-day, not bad, eh Ben?"
He was seated at the table now and she served him with soup from the huge, black pot on the stove.

"No!" he admitted shortly and the two lapsed into silence. Ben ate slowly and not

with his usual gusto.

Prudence Leduc—for she was Irish and but a slim colleen fresh from the Green Isle when Jean Leduc met and married her in Montreal—watched the blotchy mask which the flickering candle revealed to her as the face of her son; chin, nosetip, cheekbones in



high relief, the rest of the face indefinite shadow. Yet she knew that he was ill at ease. Usually his gaze roved around the table regarding the victuals hungrily. "What's that?" he would say suddenly peeping into the next dish, his mouth still full of the previous course. To-night he bent his eyes on his plate and was silent.

"All in good time!" thought the patient mother, and, although a little curious as all good women are concerning those they love. she determined to be patient. Ben had been this way lately, but some evenings more taciturn than others.

THUS the evening passed away. She washed the dishes and sat down to stitch while he smoked beside the stove.

About an hour later she rose, took off her quaint spectacles and put away her things.

"I'm going to bed! Good night Ben!" she announced.

Ben did not move from his crouching position beside the fire, but spoke with his pipe still in his mouth.

"Stop a bit mother! I've got something to tell you."

"Yes dear?" anxious and inquiring in

"I'm going to be married!" he blurted out

"To-be-married? Ben-"

"Yes! Good night. I thought you would like to know."

"Good night Ben!" she murmured faintly, clutching her throat to stem the sudden tide of emotion and fear which rushed over her. She could scarcely see the narrow steps up which she must pass to her chamber abovethen blackness, blackness.

"Oh!"-a little, weak wounded cry, and she slipped in a heap to the floor, unconscious.

Bright sunshine awakened her. So late! so late, and the cows not milked. Dear me, she must get up at once. From below came the smell of coffee and the sound of Ben moving clumsily. He heard the slight noise as she got out of bed and stood up.

"Mother?" he called from the stairs, "Shall

I bring you some coffee up?"

"No, no Ben boy!" she called down, "I'm

getting up."

"You did give me a fright!" said Ben presently when she was seated at the table sipping the hot liquid. Only then did she recall the news of the night before that had resulted in her sudden faintness.

"Married? Ben!"

"Yes mother!" he returned, blushing furiously beneath stubble and tan.

She looked up at him imploringly. "You must?" she asked.

"Now mother!" he said. "you stopped me once before. That's why I found it so hard to tell you this time."

"I said it was just boy's fancy. So it was!"

she reminded him gently.

"Yes," he admitted slowly, "So it was.

But I mean it this time mother!"

She read the determination of a man set to his purpose in the face before her and lapsed into silence. Love was against her pleading-argument in vain. He pulled on his sheepskin jacket and fur hat and left her seated beside the table in the sunny kitchen.

Curious she should look so aghast at the news her son had given her. "Ben's going to be married! Going to be married!" ran the ceaseless refrain through her brain. Then after a few moments of preoccupation during which the tears dried on lashes and some strange horror drew her mouth into grim lines at the corners - "I can never tell him now! Oh God-." Then back again to "Ben's going to be married - married." And why not? Why not a sweet young wife for her boy? Ah! there was the rub. The price was great and could she pay? Gracious me, she hadn't even asked the name of the girl!

Fumblingly, she drew a woollen cap over her head and pulled on her cloak. She went out into the crisp morning searching for Ben in the outhouses. There she found him in the horse stable mending harness-silently occupied, concerned with the attitude of his moth-

er towards his marriage.

"Ben!" she called. He looked up. don't even know her name! Who-who is she?"

"Marie!" he said softly, "Marie Fournier, mother!"

"Oh!" she exclaimed tonelessly and returned to the house. "Marie-Marie Fournier" in that vibrant voice which lovers use, drummed in her ears unmercifully.

Never was there such a morning! She could not settle to do a thing! She gave it up and sat down to her thoughts. Then an idea struck her. She must see Father Morea, the kindly little priest down in the village-that would ease her conscience. Relief came to her from this decision and she turned her attention to the pies again.

Obsessed with her resolution she set about working round to carrying it out logically without alarming her son. Four days until Sunday; she could not wait that long. It would be hard to lead up to a visit to the village in the middle of the week like this.

Most of the night she tossed in quandary rejecting now this plan, now that as perilous to the success of her venture; to keep knowledge of her visit from Ben. And by the time dawn had come she had persuaded her-



self that she would go at once. She dressed in the darkness, moving stealthily. Successful so far! In the kitchen she pulled on her heavy boots and crept out into the yard. The dawn wind blew chill as she stumbled over the frosty snow and began to traverse the icy ruts of the bush road laboriously.

Breathless! Breathless—but she must on! The road became easier to travel as it neared the village.

Now cottages appeared from whose chimneys sweet smelling wood smoke spiralled in white wreaths. Old Bussiere at the General Store was unlocking his shutters and gave her hearty "Bon Jour!"

She passed on. Here the new church, proud and serene on its little hillock pointed a steely finger through the morning mists. She bowed reverently in its direction and went on to the neat red "Prsebytere" beyond.

Father Moreau, kindly, calm; bowed by years of faithful service to his flock, was coming from his door as she reached the garden gate. He saluted her gravely and continued his walk across the garden plot towards the church. For a moment she hesitated.

"Father!" she cried tremulously. He paused in his slow progress.

"Daughter?"

In spite of the warmth of interest in his tone the smooth, pale face which he turned towards her remained impassive.

"You would speak with me?"

She nodded her assent.

"I go now to the church," he said making motion in that direction with the hand which held his missal—"Follow!"

SHE pushed back the garden gate and stepped into his foot prints in the snow, up the steps and into the quiet interior.

Ahead, the lamps glowed redly before the altar—no other color stained the grey shadows for the windows were plain and the saints' bright plaster garments were blackened by the gloom.

He motioned her to stand at the end of the church and vanished into obscurity. Soon one faint sound—the matin bell. She felt slight alarm at being alone in the sacred edifice in dusk almost equal to night.

The bell above her ceased. The hollow clang of a closing door caused her heart to beat tremulously. The priest had returned and was now lighting candles before the shrines. He knelt in prayer. The silence was oppressive and instinctively the woman moved forward, sprinkled herself with holy water from the stoop and slowly lowered herself to one knee. Father Moreau finished his invocation and rose to his feet. Bowing low be-

fore the altar he retreated backwards and shuffled in the direction of the confessional.

Ah! the kindly heart had divined her wish. She rose to her feet and crossed the church also towards the confessional—her boots, in spite of attempts to lessen their noise, echoing loudly on the stone flags. She reached the confessional in an ecstacy of emotion and sobbed as she sank into the narrow enclosure.

Silence fell again. Then muttering arose. Then another silence. The woman was speaking now, her voice increasing in clearness as eagerness in her story grew.

"Oh! Father-My Ben, he's going to get

married!"

The voice of the priest measured and grave.

"Even so, my daughter, and good in the sight of the Lord!"

Desperately, now that her time had come.
"Father, father! You don't understand!
You don't know!"

Both were speaking in French—rapid, intense.

"He was sick," pursued the woman thickly, "So sick that it seemed like he would die. In Montreal—and my only boy. I went to the church and prayed. I vowed to the Holy Virgin and all the Saints—'Spare him' I said, 'and he shall be yours.' I burnt candles—fasted, prayed—and he got better, quite well again. Father, my prayer was answered and I swore, 'I will give my son to the Church for this holy miracle'."

Sobs overcame the tremulous voice. The priest spoke again, questioningly, then sooth-

ingly.

"I didn't! I didn't!" broke out the old woman again, "And then we came here, and my Jean, he died, and still I kept Ben to myself. "One year more only! Holy Virgin,' I begged. And now he is going to get married—don't you see?"

The priest remained silent. To render judgment in such a case affrighted his tender soul. And yet the way seemed cruelly clear before him. Then why hesitate?

"He must be told!" he stated simply, in a

low voice.

"No! No!" the mother protested fiercely,
"Never—I will suffer, Father! I will pay, not
Ben!"

"And yet a broken vow can only be redeemed by Hell fire!" pronounced the priest solemnly and more to himself than the crouching woman.

Hell fire? It was as she had feared. There was no mistake. She stumbled to her feet and clattered across the church. Out into the frosty morning sobbing, down the road towards home in a terrified stupor. Calmly now, calm-



ly—the house was in sight and Ben must not

She went into the kitchen and mechanically took up a milk pail, crossing to the cow stable with it on her arm. She could hear Ben moving about in his room—Ben who was so soon to be married.

The streams of milk were drumming shrilly into the bucket when Ben appeared in the doorway.

"So early mother? I didn't know you were

up!"

"Yes!" she said and looked up into his face lovingly-not far from tears at the tenderness of her thoughts for him. Would he let his old mother go to Hell, even at the price of his own happiness? Not if he knew, but then he must never know. "You must bring Marie to see me Ben," she said gently.

"Oh! Mother, really?" he exclaimed with delight in his gruff voice, and awkwardly stooped and brushed her grey hair with his lips. That sealed her dicision. Never to falter now but to face her future grimly and bravely. He went out laughing boyishly and she heard him whistling as he fed the horses.

And all the while she thought, "Hell fire or his happiness." Remember, there was no comforting modern notion to relieve her stern religious dogma. She had sinned-broken a vow. She must pay, and this was the price.

She had just finished putting spoons and plates on the bare table for the noon meal when she heard scraping of feet outside. Ben was punctual. There was someone with him

She heard low voices—her son speaking in French. "She's not quite used to the idea of having another woman in the house," he said, "You must forgive her Marie, we have been a long time together." Then the girl replied almost in a whisper, but so distinctly that the words came to the old woman clearly, "But yes, my Ben! I understand, for don't I love you too?"

THE door was thrown open. "Marie-come to eat dinner with us mother," exclaimed Ben cheerily, pushing the girl into the room. She advanced almost lumberingly, red wrists and beefy hands projecting from the cuffs of her rough greatcoat, yellow hair tossed unattractively around her heavy face. Frantic chase of 'schoolgirl' complexions and frenzied corseting for lissome figure were things unknown to her. "Impossible!" culture would say, "Repulsive," and yet, broad and deep bosomed but firmly muscular she was potent mother of a brawny race; her creed that most primitive yet most truly lasting one of toiling for comfort of her husband and their children. A somewhat stupid smile puckered the corners of her large mouth, yet somehow twinkled attractively in her blue eves.

Ben's mother, still bewildered by what she had heard, turned to the stove without taking notice of the girl. "You're just in time," she muttered absently, "Ben put a plate out for-Marie." As she spoke the girl's name she looked across at Marie who grinned back.

Marie threw off her coat and strode to the stove, pushing the old woman roughly aside. "Here mother! You sit down," she said in

French, "I'll see to this!"

"Well! Well!" exclaimed Prudence Leduc as she was pushed into her chair, "I like that!" and yet she was strangely pleased at the girl's action.

Ben laughed. "Ha! Ha! Starting in right away, eh Marie?" and took his place at the other end of the table.

Marie dished out the soup dexterously, serving Ben first in accepted code of this crude community. Finally she placed herself a generous portion and sat down to it eagerly.

"Beans!" she said suddenly, after a noisy, hearty spoonful, "I like them! Good!" and she smiled across at the old woman. The meal proceeded silently - that is so far as speech was concerned - but the three were happily content since meals to them meant solely eating. Marie's uncouth kindness had smoothed over the first awkward encounter.

The girl washed the dishes and Ben chaffed her as she put them back in the wrong places. "I'll know next time, eh mother?" she teased the old woman. "You'll come again then, Marie?" said Prudence Leduc kissing the fat, red face. "Why yes! Eh, Ben!" and

they went out happily together.

In the silence of the night the old woman's stern problem again assailed her. Visions haunted her-forktailed devils and winged demons; all the mythological pictures she had ever seen, but very real to her. One she had seen in a city church of people burning in Hell, flames up to the very breasts and arms outflung in agony and terror. Ah-h! She could feel the hungry fires licking her shrinking limbs-

Yet on she must go—for Ben at first, now for Marie as well. All Hell's fierce terrors ten

times over should not deter her!

The next day Ben went again to haul wood from the bush, for the weather had turned colder and the roads were harder.

She found it hard to occupy the long, lonely hours with her accustomed tasks in the sunny kitchen. She did not even prepare herself a meal throughout the day.

Towards evening, outside chores to be done. She loosened the cows so that they might drink, and also Billy the bull, although it was not without difficulty that she at last managed to slip the chain from his neck. He was in ugly mood and tossed his head fiercely as he bounded into the yard.

Now she busied herself with throwing down hay for the cows' evening meal, and finally, taking up a basket of eggs which she had gathered from the nest boxes, she went out into the yard.

Her head was bowed for she was thinking—soon Marie and Ben and then other little people to inhabit the old farm. But perhaps she would not live long enough to see that.

What was it—that big black thing before her? She looked up to see a huge muzzle thrust towards her, white horns and crafty red eyes. She was within a foot of the black bull who angrily pawed the icy ground before her. In sudden panic she turned to flee. The treacherous ice threw her — she slipped and fell. With sudden thunderous rush the bull charged, bellowing and snorting, trampling and tossing the frail body—

Trampled snow and bloodstains and egg yolk around a crumpled mass—Ben found her and carried her into the house, placing her on a rug before the stove. What to do? A furious anger against the bull seized him. He took his gun and went out to where the beast stood arrogantly in the sunset, the cows grouped in the background. A new thought turned him from his purpose. She might not be dead. He would fetch Marie.

Dropping his gun, he ran to the horses, still standing hitched to the sleigh load of logs. Quickly he released one from the whippletree, twisted the traces up from the ground and sprang astride.

Twenty minutes elapsed before he appeared before the silent farmhouse again with Marie at his back. The cows were lowing plaintively at the closed barn door and the pigs set up a shrill chorus of protest at the delay in their supper hour.

Marie slipped to the ground and ran into the house. It was just light enough to distinguish the form before the stove. Marie knelt —Ben behind her, tall and silent. "Spirit—" she said, "Whisky perhaps, or rum—"

Prudence Leduc was not dead. She stirred and moaned at the pain produced by her slight movement. "She is speaking," called Marie anxiously, "But it's English I think, I do not comprehend. Come quickly Ben."

Her son bent down to catch the words.

"Father Moreau?"

He repeated the words he thought he had heard, doubtfully.

"Father Moreau?"

The eyes gave eager assent. Ben lunged away into the dusk and once again vanished on horseback into the gathering night, leaving Marie alone with the harshly breathing woman in the shadowy farmhouse.

Marie was afraid to move the torn body and instead went above for blankets and pillows. She removed the remains of the tattered cloak and washed the face with a little warm water. At intervals she dropped a small spoonful of spirit between the colorless lips.

Darkness deepened. Marie lit a candle and sat down to wait. Twice the old woman roused to consciousness and moaned "Father—" "Ben has gone to fetch him," said Marie kneeling beside her, and as there was no sign of understanding, again louder, "Ben has gone to fetch him dear! Oh why cannot I speak English—"

The end was near. Prudence Leduc opened her eyes and speaking very clearly said, "You must be very happy with Ben, Marie dear. I want it so." The door opened and the priest entered followed by Ben. She recognized him at once. With every effort at her command she raised herself on her elbow and cried, "You—must—not—speak—Father, it is all right now!"

"Daughter —" stammered the old man hobbling to her side. The significance of her speech and her critical condition alarmed him beyond measure. But Prudence Leduc was dead—her face smiled calmly and it was not Hell she saw.

By and by the priest spoke again. "Your mother was a very brave woman—" he murmured, tears in his eyes.

Ben stood dry-eyed and stern supporting the weeping Marie. "Brave?" There was an implied question in his tone.

"Brave—brave, a very brave woman," repeated the priest and, clasping his crucifix between his hands he slipped to his knee beside the dead.

And yet of common type-decidedly so!

A NOTHER story from the pen of Mr. Gladwell entitled "The Heritage," will appear in the November number.



# The Unexpected

By JOYCE PERCY

Here is a comedy that is written round three girls and told to the speed of eighty miles an hour.



ES (Sally Bagnall said reflectively) the gent who remarked that the unexpected always happens certainly knew what he was talking about.

F'r instance; if you'd told me some time ago that I would sit on Maggie Attaway I'd have said you were a—er—flirting with the truth, and yet, not only did I sit on her but scratched myself sliding off her nose.

Sweet Mamma, what a nose it was too. All that bird needed to do was put a little snow on it and she could have hired it out as a toboggan slide and made her fortune.

Maggie worked in our office and if you had had to choose between sitting on her and a frozen cactus you'd have chosen the cactus.

She was somewhere in the mysterious regions that lie between thirty and forty and as far as dress goes (which isn't far these days) could pass any Board of Censors hands down.

Her waistline was in the place referred to as "normal" and she wore her collar up to her ears; but if what was under the collar resembled what was above it, it was just as well.

Speaking of waistlines reminds me. It was that line caused all the trouble.

Miriam Smith was the steno in our place. She was one of these babies, who if she'd been living a few years ago would have put the skids under Cleopatra and made Helen of Troy look like a Chimpanzee with its hair in curiers.

Miriam wasn't at all stingy about showing her good looks and, being a swell dresser, of course you were liable to find her waistline anywhere between her neck and her knees.

What did Maggie Attaway do but pass some such remark to Miriam and as Miriam looked so much like an angel you couldn't expect her to act like one, she got a little peeved and told Miss Attaway that if she'd paid more attention to her own anatomy perhaps she'd have succeeded in landing old Jonathan Appleby, which she'd been making passes at for the last fifteen years.

"Keep 'em guessing," advised Miriam.

Maggie's temper, not of the best at any time, was not improved by this advice and when she couldn't find a letter which wasn't in the place I thought I put it, she landed on me with both feet. I didn't flatter myself that Miriam thought much about me—it took all her time thinking about herself—but seeing it was Maggie after me she stood by as if she was a machine gun and in a few minutes we'd told Miss Maggie just where she alighted.

For three days after we neither of us spoke to her but whenever she passed, Miriam and I would whisper to each other and giggle—although it was hard to find something to whis-

per about sometimes.

Miriam, however, was really kind-hearted for a good-looking girl and on the fourth day she decided to call the scrap off; for as she said—you never can tell—you might be in the same fix yourself some day—life is very uncertain and the bird that gets in on the ground floor catches the matrimonial worm.

Being of a diplomatic nature I reminded her that that didn't apply to anyone with a

face like hers.

She shrugged her georgette shoulders.

"My dear Sally," she said, "looks ain't got nothing to do with it. They say Cupid is blind and all you got to do is take a look at some of the wrens which is wearing the Ball and Chain on their left hand third to see that he must be paralyzed as well."

So Miriam and me relented, and to prove that we'd really scrapped our armaments, Miriam invited Maggie up to her house for dinner the next night. Miriam, however, unable to stand the strain of entertaining Maggie alone asked me along also. We were to go straight to Miriam's home when we left the office at five o'clock and the next morning Maggie came to the office dolled up like a Xmas Tree.

PUNCTUALLY at five, Miriam's brother drove up in their car to take us home. Maggie was tickled to death at the prospect of a ride in such a swell car but I felt kinda nervous on account of the fog, which was so thick you could scarcely see your hand in front of you. Nevertheless, we arrived at Miriam's home without any mishap.

After dinner we sat around and talked and by the time we'd disposed of the Peace Conference, Mary Selby's new hat and decided that all our friends would be good-looking if it wasn't for their faces, it was nine o'clock.

Maggie began to look at her watch and



remarked that for the last ten years she'd been in bed by nine-thirty.

I thought she might mean this as a hint and suggested that we'd better be going.

Miriam accompanied us into the bedroom where we'd shed our coats earlier in the evening and it was then that Maggie decided to let loose the whizz-bang she'd been saving for the last few days.

"Girls-Oh girls. I've got the most wonderful news for you," she simpered, her face the color of a mailbox. "I'm going to be your next door neighbor" she gasped, hiding her face on Miriam's shoulder.

I think I forgot to mention that Jonathan Appleby lived next door to Miriam with his widowed mother.

It took the dread tidings a few minutes to penetrate our domes and then we realized it could mean but one thing-she'd landed poor Jonathan at last.

"Why, Oh why," moaned Miriam, "should I have this thrust upon me."

"What's that?" asked Maggie.

"I said I'm-I'm delighted dear," groaned Miriam with a stricken face.

It took me some time to pry Maggie's face from Miriam's shoulder but at last I succeeded and managed to get her into her hat and coat.

When we got to the front door Miriam suggested kinda weak like that she'd like a breath of fresh air and would walk a block or two with us.

When we got outside we found the fog had vamoosed. It was the kinda night which fellers in books always pick on to propose to some fair damsel, which is probably why they get so many sells.

We'd only gone a few steps when Miriam suggested that she take us home in the car. I wasn't stuck on the idea myself. But Maggie raised no kick and Miriam finally overruled mine and took us down the back lane to the Garage.

She turned on the lights and started the engine and Maggie and I got in the back seat. There was a look in Miriam's eyes I didn't like and when she asked Maggie if she'd ever had anything exciting happen to her, I had a feeling I should get out of the car-t'would have been better for me if I had. Next time I intend to obey my "feelings."

However, I sat tight and in a few minutes we were on our way home. At least I thought we were until we began to climb a hill and I knew there was no hill on the way to Maggie's place or mine.

"Miriam," I said leaning forward, "You're on the wrong road."

"It's all right, you leave the road to me," she replied quite short.

I flopped back on the cushions and prepared myself for the worst-I'd heard of Miriam's driving before.

WE were on the top of the hill now and the road stretched wide and straight before us. As I expected, Miriam began to "step on'er."

What I didn't expect was that Maggie would jump and begin yelling like a baby which hasn't seen its bottle for twenty-four hours.

She was jumping up and down and waving something in her hand.

"Miriam Smith," she screamed above the roar of the engine, "what do you mean by luring me into a car where there's a bottle."

"What's the matter?" Miriam yelled back, "did you never see a bottle before?—it ain't going to bite you."

"But-but there's liquor in it" Maggie

screached.

"Well," said Miriam, "then what are you kicking about? I thought it must be empty the way you were shouting."

I managed to grab Maggie by the coat tail just in time to prevent her from breaking the said bottle over Miriam's cute little cha-

"For goodness sake sit down," I said. "What are you howling about anyway?"

"There-there's liquor in the-the thing" she shuddered.

"Well," I replied, "suppose there is. Many a man would give quite a few spondulicks to be in your shoes right now—there's no necessity to make such an unholy racket over it."

"Sally Bagnall," she bellowed, "I'll have you understand I'm a good christian woman and no drop of liquor ever touched these lips," and she stood up again and began waving the bottle at Miriam.

We were passing a street lamp and a presentiment that all was not well made me turn my head. What I saw made me feel as if the bottom of my chest had dropped out.

"For Gawd's sake," I croaked in Miriam's ear, "what shall we do, there's one of them cops on a motor cycle behind us, he must have seen Maggie waving the bottle."

"Do," said Miriam, "this is what we'll do," and the speedometer leaped from forty to sixty miles an hour.

I sat down so suddenly it took my breath away, but Maggie and the bottle were before me, and it was then that I did the aforementioned slide off Maggie's nose.

We sat in petrified silence for about two minutes and then a queer odor began to assail my nostrils.

"Maggie," I said, trying to keep the sus-



picion out of my voice, "what are you doing with that bottle?"

"The cork's come - come out of the dammed thing," she sobbed, "and it's all over my clothes, I sm-sm-smell like a saloon."

"Well," I said, "I can't say I'm familiar enough with saloons to know what they smell like but you certainly smell like my idea of one."

After I had got used to finding myself in Maggie's corner and Maggie in mine, I had time to reflect what a mystery that bottle was.

I knew for a fact that all Miriam's family were respectable teetotal people and I couldn't figure out how a bottle could get in any car of theirs.

However, I didn't have much time for figuring. By this time the old bus was humming, I'll tell the universe, and I don't expect to have a faster ride this side of the grave.

I was mournfully thinking of my sister Nell wearing my new georgette waist and was getting a little comfort out of the thought that by the time she was out of mourning the blouse would be out of style; when Maggie happened to glance around and saw that the cop was gaining on us. She stood up and screamed to Miriam to drive faster.

I figured we were hitting it up to the tune of eighty miles an hour when all at once I noticed the speed was diminishing.

Maggie was ready for a padded cell by this

"Faster - faster, you wall-eyed, nickleplated idiot," she whispered into Miriam's ear.

But it was no good. We had come to a full stop. Miriam jumped out of her seat and unscrewed the cap of the gas tank. Then she

went back and looked at the gauge. "That's the queerest thing I ever heard of, that tank was filled this afternoon and we haven't done more than about seven miles."

THEN the cop came along. Now Miriam had a passing acquaintance with almost every cop in town and it wasn't the first time she'd had her name and address taken and been handed a ticket. She welcomed this minion of the law with a smile that should have knocked him cuckoo.

"Miriam Smith, 2459 Harwood Street, Iicense number 34469, speed approximately eighty miles an hour," she said before he was

off his cycle.

But I could see there was something wrong. He wasn't even looking at Miriam when she gave him the glad orb. His glassy eye was fixed on Maggie and when I turned and took a look, I couldn't blame him-she was an eye arresting sight.

Her switch had got loose and was dangling

coyly from one ear, while her hat was perched, at a rakish angle, on the other. Her fringe which under normal circumstances she tried to kid the world into believing curly, now gave her the lie-it was straight and sticking out around her face like the quills on a porcupine's back. In addition there was murder in her eve.

The constable looked at her, his head on one side. "Pickled," he said, "pickled to the eyes."

A deep shade of mauve tinged Maggie's

face and she staggered towards him.

"Sir," she said, "how dare you say I'm pickled. I'll have you know I'm a good christian woman. A drop of liquor never passed these lips."

The cop waved her back. "Phew," he said, "stand back, your breath makes me dizzy."

"It's not my breath," choked Maggie, "I-I spilt the stuff."

"Yeah," said the cop, "I'll say you spilt

Miriam stepped forward. "Look here." she said, "this has gone far enough. We've run out of gasoline that's all, and of course I know I was exceeding the speed limit a trifle. You'd better take my name and address and give me my ticket and go."

"That's all right lady," he replied. "You can explain all that down to the station. It's my duty to get this woman in a safe place for the night," jerking his thumb in Maggie's direction, "and I know no safer place than a cell. I must ask you three ladies" (he had a nasty way of saying 'ladies') "to come along with me, and I warns you right now that anything you say will be used as evidence against you."

The warning was superfluous—we couldn't

have spoken if we'd tried.

The police station was only a couple of blocks away, and after locking the car he made us walk in front of him, and before I realized what had happened I discovered that a jail is one of the places that it's nicer to be on the outside looking in than on the inside looking

The cop, whose name we learnt was Johnston, gave a woman orders to take Maggie away.

"She's too far gone to answer any ques-

tions," he said.

Miriam and I then had to give an account of our movements from the time we were born. After which we were turned over to another cop who requested us to step along with him to the cells.

As we neared them we heard a noise that would have done credit to a lunatic asylum and I recognized Maggie's voice shouting dire threats and then there burst upon our gaze the spectacle of the once staid, respectable Miss

Attaway, shaking the bars of her cage a la Gorilla and I decided that a gent by the name of Charles Darwin might have had the right idea after all.

MIRIAM and I were gently conducted to a couple of like cages where we were told we might perch for the night, rent free.

"There," said the footman who conducted us to our domiciles, "If mamma could see her

pretty babies now."

This started Maggie weeping again, and as the officer of the law went past her cage she reached through the bars and grabbed his sleeve.

"Oh officer — officer," she howled, "you have a good kind face, you'll bail me out won't you?"

"Say," said the good, kind face, "what do you think I am? I ain't looking for no contract with a stummick pump,"

Miriam was the least concerned of anyone, so much so in fact, that I couldn't refrain from asking her if she'd ever been there before.

"No," she replied, "but I've always had a feeling I should pay a visit here some time."

"Well," Maggie chimed in sourly, "next time you decide to pay a visit you'll kindly count me out. I'll have you know I'm respectable."

"It's all right," Miriam replied, "they can't keep us here for merely speeding and anyway father will hear of it and bail us out."

"By the way," she continued, "don't sit on your—ah—bed, I heard the other day that the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals are going to take proceedings against the Jail because the—eh—little animals in the blankets here complained that they hadn't been washed for the last ten years."

I heard Maggie rise with a bound and I

got up somewhat hurriedly myself.

Hour after hour dragged past and there was no word of our getting bail. Miriam gave quite an interesting debate on the faithlessness of human nature, especially one's friends. But time brings forgetfulness—we were awakened the next morning by our Chambermaids of the night before.

I was stiff, sore and cold, and found myself resting on the blankets Miriam had warned me of. On inquiry I found the others felt

much the same.

We decided to breakfast in our rooms and when the constable brought us our breakfast, i.e.: a lonesome, shame-faced sausage on a tin plate, and alleged coffee in a tin cup; which he pushed through a slot in the bottom of the door, I felt I had indeed reverted to type.

I returned the sausage, still in its entirety, and judging from the remarks from the other cells, Maggie and Miriam did the same.

We were then informed that we should have to appear in the Court at ten that morning. At which joyful news Maggie grimly informed us we were about to witness a respectable citizen, namely herself, vindicate her character.

"Yes," she said, "I shall conduct my own defense. I'll show them—they shall crawl to me on their knees to beg forgiveness."

"And will you forgive them?" asked Mir-

iam.

"No, I shall spurn them like that," she said. A bang and yell of pain followed her words and I judged she had forgotten the size of the room for a moment.

Further description of what Maggie was going to do to the Law was interrupted by a jingling of keys and another constable appeared.

He told us we were to follow him, which we did, up a lot of narrow, winding stairs, until we came to a narrow door. It was an innocent appearing door, but its purpose was diabolical.

It precipitated us with terrible shock into the midst of a crowd of people who looked as if they had just attended their own funerals.

We filed into a long box and proceeded to sit down but were immediately jerked upright again, while a man sitting on the Bench, whom I recognized as Magistrate Handittoem, fixed a cold and fishy eye on Maggie.

"Magdalene Leonara Arbutus Attaway," he read, "you stand before the Court charged that you did on the evening of October 23rd, act in a drunk and disorderly manner disturbing to the public peace. Guilty or not guilty?"

MAGDALENE Leonara Arbutus Attaway seemed to have great difficulty in breathing. She fixed the fishy-eyed one with an orb registering sixty below zero.

"Sir," she began, having regained her breath by a great effort of will, "you kindly remember that I'm Miss Magdalene Leonara Arbutus Attaway and I'll have you know that I'm a good, christian woman and a drop of liquor—"

The fishy-eyed one banged on his desk with a hammer.

"Silence," he thundered.

"Any witnesses?" he asked one of the men sitting at the table.

I could see that Maggie was contemplating murder when our friend Constable Johnston took the stand.

He kissed a far from sanitary bible with gusto and under the gentle encouragement of a lawyer standing below the box proceeded to tell his story.



"Was the accused—eh—slightly under the

influence?" he was asked.

"Slightly," said the cop with a snort. "She was in such a state, sir, as few people nowadays has the time or money to get in. Pickled sir, pickled to the eyes, that's what she was and carrying on something awful. I had some time getting her to the station, I'll tell the world."

Maggie, smarting under the memory of her lamb-like walk to the Police Station, brushed off the detaining hand of the constable at her

side, as if it had been a mosquito.

"You dirty, sneaking, hypocrite," she shrieked, to the intense enjoyment of the audience, "just you wait until I get you outside. I'll have you know I'm a — — "

The rest of the speech was lost. A large, red, and none too clean hand descended over Maggie's mouth, and at the sound of the hammer, and the thought of being ejected from the show, the audience restrained their mirth.

"Was this woman drunk?" the constable

was again asked.

"Well, sir, if she wasn't she was one of the best imitations I've ever seen."

Magistrate Handittoem nodded.

"That'll do," he said with a kindly smile.
"Fifty dollars and costs," he rapped out to
the now foaming - at - the - mouth Maggie.
Whereon she stopped foaming and it took the
cop and his water sprinkler ten minutes to
bring her around again.

By this time old Handittoem had read the same little love message to Miriam and I, with

a slight but very serious change.

We had expected to be charged with exceeding the speed limit but instead he rang in the cheerful news that Miriam and I (I was accessory after the fact, whatever that is) were guilty of freezing unto a \$6,000.00 bus which didn't belong to us.

It appeared the license number Miriam gave the night before was her own number all right, but not the number on the car she had

been driving.

I had a swell coat of goose-flesh on me when I heard this interesting item and when I looked at Miriam she was as white as the

whitewash on the wall.

Our friend Constable Johnston was about to ascend the pulpit again when there was a commotion at the door. The visitor, whoever he was, finally won his case and the policeman stood aside. Who should walk in but Jonathan Appleby.

Maggie gave a shriek and held out her

arms to him.

"Jonathan — Jonathan — my love — my Prince Charming — " she screamed, "You've come to rescue me?"

Jonathan didn't respond very heartily to

this greeting, especially when a nasty little snigger began to gather force in the room.

His Adam's Apple was working over-time and a rich shade of crimson was working its wicked way to his ears.

"Now, now Maggie calm yourself," he

said when he could get his breath.

He managed to convey to the Court that he had something he wished to say and immediately took the stand.

After trying to find a clean spot on the bible in vain, he evidently decided that in the interests of law and justice he would take a chance and closing his eyes was duly sworn.

"You will remember," he began, almost in a whisper, "that it was very foggy the early part of the evening last night."

Magisrate Handittoem's eyes began to

bulge.

"Have you come here to discuss the weather?" he bellowed.

Jonathan shook his head.

"No sir," he faltered. "I just mentioned the fact. I'm the man who belongs to the car these young ladies are accused of having stolen. In my opinion they are perfectly innocent, sir. You see, I live next door to Miss Smith, in fact, our garages are side-by-side, and last evening, owing to the fog, Miss Smith put her car in my garage, by mistake, and when I came home I did likewise and put my car in her garage."

"There is very little difference in the two cars, your Worship, so it was quite natural that Miss Smith should think she had her own car when she took the two ladies for a ride."

His Worshipful Handittoem considered this

for a moment.

"Ah," he said, "quite so, quite so."

Jonathan proceeded to descend the steps, but was immediately called back.

"Just a moment Mr. Appleby," said the magistrate, "there's one other delicate little question to be settled. How did the—eh—bottle happen to get in your car?"

It was a heartless question. Until then, Maggie had been regarding Jonathan with much the same expression of fond regard with which a mouse regards a piece of Limberger. Now she regarded him as if he was some new, and dangerous species of reptile.

He stumbled back up the stairs.

"W—ell you see," he stammered, "it's like this. I—I live with my aged mother, my mother—mother—eh—" He turned appealing eyes on the audience and ran his finger around his collar, "It's very warm in here," he volunteered.

"Go on," roared the lawyer.

A look of inspiration crossed Jonathan's face.

"Lately-lately," he said brightly, "she has

not been quite up to the mark and the doctor ordered ah—a little—just a very little brandy for her every day. I suffer from absentmindedness sometimes—"

"You certainly do," Maggie hissed.

"And," continued Jonathan, "last night I left the bottle in the car instead of taking it into the house."

He turned appealing eyes on the Magistrate, who smiled at him sympathetically.

"I understand," he nodded. "Thank you Mr. Appleby. You have cleared the matter up very nicely. That is all just now."

After making a few investigations to find out if Jonathan was telling the gospel, Magistrate Handittoem gave us a lecture, advising us to eschew evil ways and especially (with a meaning glance at Maggie) avoid the company of drunken women, and with that gave us to understand that the charge was dismissed.

Maggie's fine, however, had to stand, for as old Handittoem said—Jonathan's evidence didn't prove that Maggie had not disposed of the liquor to her own advantage, or disadvantage, which ever you like.

In my humble opinion, ladies and gentlemen, Jonathan Appleby's name should go down in history alongside that of Napoleon. It was a brave deed he did that morning for he's going to have one sweet time explaining to Maggie how he bought the liquor for his mother when she's been away for the last six months.

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# The Winking Eye

By MAURICE INSKIPP

Within the shadow of the sphinx and with the last rays of oriental splendour dissolving about them, they listen to the tale which inspired this story. Here is a newly discovered Canadian Writer who gathered his material in the land of The Nile.



N the city of Jiddah in the kingdom of Husein Ibn Ali there lives one, Abdul, a teller of tales. When the sun is red in the west and the shadows of the minarets are long,

Abdul leaves his hut and walks to the water's edge, where the barges lie with their furled lateen sails and the loaders rest from the day's labor and drink coffee in the neighboring cafés. Here he squats crossed-legged upon the ground, shouting his invitation to come and hear the marvellous tale of Ali Baba. But piastres fall more heavily into the earthen bowl between his knees when he tells a story of one of the many wonderful things that has happened in his own ken, for Abdul is very old and wise, and his tired eyes have seen much.

It was just such an evening as this, when Geoffrey Duncan halted on the edge of the circle to hear what Abdul had to say.

"This evening," he began, when there were sufficient piastres in the bowl to warrant the commencement of the narrative, "I will beguile your ears, weary with the clatter of the day, with the tale of the bearded Englessi of the winking eye, the pasha who shall be unnamed and the beautiful Turkish slave."

The squatting crowd edged in closer, for this was a tale they loved, and Duncan edged with them.

"It was in the days," proceeded Abdul, "when I was head of the servants who tended the gardens of the pasha whose name is not to be spoken. The pasha was a wealthy man and had many wives. Being a descendant of the Prophet, he wore the green fez and went each year on the pilgrimage to Mecca, and also took one journey to Constantinople, from whence he brought much rich merchandise. One year, the chief eunuch of the harem, a Sudanese of great stature and immense strength, received a message from our lord that he was bringing home with him another slave; but, since she was as fair as a lily and of wondrous beauty, she was not to be received as a slave, but as a wife and with great honor. The day of our lord's return arrived, and a sumptuous palanquin was despatched upon a white camel. I was tending the palms in the garden that lies before the courtyard of the

harem, so I saw the woman enter. The eyes above the yashmak veil were liquid and beautiful as the drops that fall from the fount of life, but they were heavy with a great sad-

"It was the next year, just after our lord had returned from Mecca, that the Engleesi arrived. I was superintending the picking of the peaches that grew upon the outer wall, and the Engleesi stepped within the gates to gaze upon the beauty of the gardens. Our lord, who was ever hospitable and generous, as becomes a descendant of the Prophet, invited the stranger to coffee and rest. The Engleesi never again set foot without our gates.

Abdul pauzed to gaze reflectively at the stars that now hung like lamps in the Eastern sky. The crown shuffled closer, and Duncan, intensely interested, took up a position of greater vantage. He marvelled at this strange tale, strange and yet vaguely familiar. He had a faint recollection of hearing something of the sort before, but could not remember where.

"The Engleesi," continued Abdul, "stayed for many months a willing guest. He and our master became the closest friends, and many hours would they spend together, walking arm in arm in the garden and speaking earnestly. The Engleesi discarded the foolish dress peculiar to his race and, instead of the breeches that ceased at the knees and made his long legs appear as the legs of a stork, he adopted the galabieh and the turban. He also let his beard grow, and it was then we noticed the wonderful resemblance to our master. In three months there were alike as two figs upon the same tree. Then, the Englessi in turn discarded the turban and adopted the fez, whereby we knew that he had forsaken the religion of his fathers and become a true follower of the Prophet."

A murmur of approbation passed through the circle of listeners.

"This pleased our master mightily, and, when the voice of the meezzin sounded from the minaret, they would walk together to the mosque to give praise to Allah."

Abdul paused again to gaze reflectively at

the stars. Duncan lit a cigarette. He now understood why this tale was not altogether new. He remembered a letter he had received three years before from an old school chum by the name of Caldwell, from this very city of Jiddah. He could even recall the actual words:

".... I have a strong inclination to become a Mohammedan, for I am surrounded with an Oriental splendour that is exactly suited to my temperament. There is also a Turkish slave. Such eyes, old boy—such eyes! If I can get a wink of an eye past this pasha host of mine, my storm-tossed bark will at last be moored in a quiet haven ..."

Could this really be old-Caldwell? Duncan pushed past a seller of lemonade in order that he might draw closer. Abdul again took

up the thread of the narrative.

"My eyes have ever been eyes that see, but my tongue has ever known discretion. and I observed much that none other saw and held my peace. The Engleesi was wont to pace at a late hour beneath the meshrabiyêh windows of the harem. He would stamp thrice with his foot, a slot would be raised, and a pair of dark eyes would gaze down. The eyes were the eyes that I saw above the yashmak veil, and in the moonlight they were soft as those of a gazelle. It was not in my heart to be disloyal to my master, but my eyes were paid to watch that no weeds grew among the plants, not to observe the conduct of my master's guests; besides, I remembered the sadness in the eyes above the veil, and that they were the eyes of a slave, and soft and beautiful, and my heart has ever been tender to women, so I spoke not. The windows of the harem were not seven feet from the ground, and the Engleesi was of great height, so by raising himself upon his toes he was able to press the lips that pursed themselves through the slot. But I knew that this could not last, and that when our lord learned of the matter the Engleesi's life would not be worth the smallest mite that is not sufficient to purchase five green olives, and that the slave would be made to carry the water jars and treated as a beast of burden. And now the Engleesi, when he thought himself unobserved, would slink to the courtyard gate and watch my master's wives as they took their ease around the fountain, or played and sewed. When his eye caught the eye of the slave, who had no doubt been prepared, it would wink, and the eye of the slave would wink in answer. Therefore I named him the Englessi of the winking eye."

"One night, I was watching as usual in the shadows of the palms before the court. I observed my master steal, soft-footed as a thief, behind the Englessi as he craned his head to

the lovely face above him. But, before my master could strike, the woman screamed, and the Englessi turned in time to fend the blow. There was a great struggle, for both had strength. I rushed forward, with others attracted by the uproar, to aid my master, but, as I have before said, they were as like as two figs upon the same tree, and we well-nigh strangled our lord before we found our mistake. The Engleesi was cast into a cell in the vaults with much reviling. The next day we found him mad, for he cursed us as undiscerning fools and ordered us to set him free. But we laughed and spat in his face. Strange to relate, our lord condemned not the slave, but exalted her to greater favor, so that she was hated by the other women."

A BDUL ceased, and commenced to rattle the coins in the bowl in a suggestive manner. When he had extorted as much bakshish as possible, he rose to depart. But the crowd was still curious, for he had always finished the story here.

"And what of the Englessi?" a voice asked.
"He is still in the cell with iron bars and walls the thickness of a man's length," was

the answer.

The crowd began to disperse, and Abdul poured the coins from the bowl into a leathern pouch and set out for home. But Duncan wished to hear more of this countryman of his who had paid with his freedom for winking at a slave, so he strode swiftly after the bent figure retreating into the gloom of a narrow, unlit street. He tapped Abdul upon the shoulder.

"If you will tell me more, I will double the contents of the pouch."

Abdul's eyes glittered shrewdly. "There is no more to tell," he answered with a shrug. "Where does the pasha live?"

"The tale is finished," said Abdul abrupt-

"Tell me this, and I will treble the con-

tents of the pouch."

"I am old," said Abdul slowly, "and if the feeble spark of life were quenched to-night I would still have lived. You are young, and the flame burns brightly, so be not curious, lest you too enter the gates through which you shall never again come forth"—and he turned and hobbled into the night.

Duncan walked to his hotel, thinking deeply. That night he decided, at whatever hazard, to find out what truth lay behind the tale, and if a fellow-countryman languished in the dungeon of some Moslem lord, to set him

free.

The following morning Duncan roamed the narrow streets in an endeavor to find the story-teller. He raked the bazaars in vain,



and was about to return home when his path was obstructed by the seller of lemonade who had been in the circle the night before. The man was shouting his wares in a raucous voice and clinking his two brass cups.

"Oh, thirsty one!—Allay the heat!—Rest for the throat!" Then thrusting his face in close proximity to Duncan's own, he muttered: "The Englessi thirsts for more than lemon-

water?"

Duncan attempted to push past, but the

fellow proved obstinate.

"The Englessi thirsts to hear more of last night's tale? I can tell him, but I am a poor man, and I have a large family to support."

"I will give you good bakshish," replied Duncan quickly, his face lighting up at the unexpected luck.

"Then, come."

The man led the way to a quiet square, where the tumult of the bazaars was reduced to a faint medley of sound.

"What does the Engleesi wish to know?"

"What truth lies in the tale."

"The tale is true, for at the time I was a helper in the gardens."

"Where does the pasha live?"

"On the edge of the city. If the Englessi wishes, I will show the way, but I am a poor man, and I have a large family to support."

"Does the Engleesi still live?"

"As Abdul says, in a cell with iron bars and walls the thickness of a man's length. Such is revenge."

"Show me the place."

In ten minutes they were outside a wall that flanked the road for about three hundred yards. In the centre of the wall were two large gates. Duncan peered through the gates upon a green lawn shaded here and there by clumps of palms. A trellis-work covered with luxuriant creeping flowers preserved the front of the mansion in the state of Oriental secrecy so dear to the Moslem heart. Turning to his guide, he enquired the name of the owner of this lordly residence.

"Hassan Pasha. But, whatever befalls thee, mention not who guided thee hither."

Duncan swore to secrecy upon the matter, dismissed the man with fifty piastres and set out upon a tour of inspection. He found that the wall enclosed the grounds and formed a square. The height of the wall made scaling without a ladder a matter of impossibility, and, as he dared not venture through the gates to inspect further, he walked back to his hotel to formulate a plan of action. Of course, there was still a possibility that the tale might be the product of a fertile imagination, and that its similarity to the account Caldwell had given of himself in his letter might be merely a strange coincidence. Dun-

can lay awake long hours trying to figure out a plan of campaign. Presuming that the tale were true, he surmised that a second Englishman would not be received with the same cordiality as the first. Having done considerable secret service work during the war, he decided to adopt Arab disguise and announce himself as a Bedouin sheik. The matter settled, he rolled over and went to sleep.

T WO days later a figure dressed in a green galabieh, a fez round which was wound a spotless turban, and with no socks, only very pointed scarlet shoes, swung open the gates of Hassan Pasha's garden and walked slowly towards the front of the house. Flanking the trellis-work, the figure paused abruptly to make a profound obeisance to a second figure that was pacing slowly round a fountain that played in the centre of the court. The second figure also paused, to gaze at the visitor.

"Salaam aleik - peace be to thee," said

Duncan.

"Aleik es-salaam—and to thee be peace," replied the other, whose silken garments and green fez proclaimed him Hassan Pasha, descendant of the Prophet and lord of the mansion.

"I have come to beg the favor of speech with thee," said Duncan.

Hassan bowed and beckoned Duncan to seat himself upon a divan; then, striking a small gong, he ordered coffee to be brought.

"My name," began Duncan, "is Suleim, although it is altogether too insignificant for a man of your exalted rank to have heard it spoken."

Hassan inclined his head in a condescend-

ing manner.

"I am shiek," continued Duncan, "of a Bedouin tribe whose tents stand in the desert three days' journey beyond the Nile. Zeal for Islam and hatred for the unbelievers, and the Englessi in particular, has brought me to Jiddah."

Hassan's brows lifted. "Zeal for Islam and hatred for unbelievers is as the breath of many gardens in the nostrils of Allah. But where-

fore come to Jiddah?"

"I am come to offer myself and five hundred men to the cause. Although, as yet, we who dwell beyond the Nile have received no taint, the infidels run over Egypt as lice upon the body of a dog, and there seems not one who dares to raise a hand. But I am eaten up with desire to wreak revenge on the cursed Engleesi."

"Wherefore this intense desire for revenge?"

"When the sultan took up arms against the unbelievers we hoped to see the land cleared of the scourge, therefore we flung our bands

upon the British forces that lay like ocusts along the Nile, but we were driven back with heavy losses. My father fell, and I and another crept back one night to turn his face to Mecca and scratch the loose sand over his body, that it might be saved from the desert dogs. I now seek revenge."

"And revenge is easier obtained in Jid-

dah?"

"My intent is to cross the desert to the land of the Jews. There, I am told, the Englessi are wont to camp beneath the stars. I would fall upon a party of such and bring one, just one, back for my purpose."

"And your purpose?"

"Duncan's eyes flashed, and he appeared the very incarnation of revenge as he rose

from the divan.

"He shall lead the life of a dog that eats the refuse of the streets. He shall hew and draw; he shall carry an ass's load from the rising to the setting of the sun; then he shall lay his head amongst the droppings of the camels with no other balm for his sores than the licking of dogs. When his spirit is dead and his body broken—"this was followed by a significant gesture, and Duncan sank back into his seat.

Hassan scrutinized him with penetrating eyes. The corners of his mouth began to twitch. Suddenly he flung back his head and gave

vent to a loud bellow of laughter.

"Perhaps," he spluttered, "it will not be necessary to journey to the land of the Jews. But you will rest here for the night, and we will discuss this matter again tomorrow."

Duncan lay upon his bed, snuffing the cool night air that came heavy laden with the fragrance of the garden. "And so," he chuckled, "perhaps it will not be necessary to journey to the land of the Jews. I really believe that the old limb of Satan has taken the bait." He

fell asleep.

Duncan dreamed. He was back once again at school, stretched upon his back with his chest laid bare, upon which Billy Caldwell was practising the tatooer's art with a darning needle and a bottle of red ink. The resulting crude portrayal of a horse's head had never been erased. He stirred uneasily and opened his eyes. A tall, bearded figure was bending over him, examining the mark. At the stirring of the sleeper the figure glided away. Duncan wondered if the figure were also a dream. But the fluttering of the curtain behind which it had vanished seemed to point to the contrary.

"Rum!" he muttered - "rum! - I could

swear that was old Hassan."

The following morning, Hassan took Duncan by the arm and led him to an arbor in the garden.

"My friend," he said, "I will save you the fatigue of the desert journey you purport taking."

Duncan made no reply.

"I too desired revenge, but my soul is now glutted with it."

Duncan still made no comment.

"I also suffered grievously at the hands of an Engleesi. But I have had my revenge. Listen, and I will tell you," and Hassan repeated the story Duncan had heard from the lips of Abdul. "And now," concluded Hassan, "since death brings rest, and he deserves it not, he shall be delivered to you that the death of your father may also be avenged. But come, and I will show you the infidel dog."

Hassan led Duncan down a flight of steps to a door in the vaults of the mansion. This he unlocked. They entered, and Hassan pointed to another door, with a small grill, to the right of the entrance. Duncan peered through the grill into a tiny cell that was lit by a narrow, barred window situated high up in the wall. A feeling of nausea swept over him as he gazed upon the sight within. The emaciated figure of a man, clad in filthy rags, lay upon a mattress on the floor. The wretch glanced at him with lack-lustre eves. beard had been shaven, and, in spite of the matted hair that hung about the face, Duncan perceived a strong likeness to his old college friend.

"You can take him," said the voice of Hassan behind, "for I am weary at the sight of

such vermin."

"He will require garments," Duncan remarked. Then, as he was eager to be alone with the captive: "There is no need for further delay, and a cast-off galabieh will suffice."

H ASSAN departed to procure the required article, and Duncan turned again to the grill.

"Caldwell," he said quickly.

The miserable wretch clambered to his feet and tottered towards him.

"Caldwell, poor old chap!"—there was a catch in Duncan's voice. "Do you know me?"

The broken man commenced to gabble feverishly in Arabic. One word tumbled over another in an unintelligible manner. Duncan caught: "Cast here by eunuchs—cursed infidel!—descendant of the Prophet." The whole finished up in a pitiful whine that nearly reduced Duncan himself to tears.

"Completely out of his mind, and no won-

der!" he muttered.

Hassan returned with an ancient and soiled robe, and dangling a key in his hand.

"I have made all arrangements," he re-



marked. "A ship sails to-night for Port Said with a cargo of figs. I have despatched a messenger to arrange for accommodation."

That night, in the light of the moon, the gibbering wretch, who seemed fearful of further atrocities, was persuaded with difficulty to enter a carriage. Hassan decided to accompany them to the water's edge, to see that the matter of embarkation went smoothly. This, of course, gave Duncan no opportunity of regaining his European clothes, and he cursed inwardly at the predicament in which he found himself. However, he would not forsake the poor devil who was cowering in a corner with his head buried in his arms. Duncan gazed at him with a heavy heart. Poor old Caldwell! Just like a nigger! Forgotten even his own language!

It required four men to carry him, struggling and biting, upon the boat, where he was

locked immediately in a tiny cabin. Duncan strolled back to the bulwarks to find that the ropes were already cast off. Hassan was regarding him in a benevolent manner.

"May peace go with thee," he remarked. Duncan cursed an answer beneath his breath and thought of the tale he would tell in the consul's office in Cairo. Then he noticed a very peculiar thing. Hassan's right eye began to wink in a violent manner. The ship was edging away from the wharf, and Hassan bent towards him.

"Duncan, old man," he said in perfect English, "you needn't have worried. And get a professional to transform that horse's head on your chest into a butterfly—it would look a lot prettier. You will find your clothes on board."

Duncan gasped. Through the cabin door came the ravings of the maniac.

E know you have been impatient for the coming of this inaugural number of The QUILL, and we sincerely hope it measures up to the high expectations you entertained for it.

It is but a start.

In the warm soil of your kindly criticism—your tolerance—your loyalty—and your patience may we grow to the stature of usefulness in the country we represent, and in the literature we are striving to build.

The Editors.



## Pure Gold

By R. O. FROST

A charity worker, called in to administer relief to a woman and children starving in a city tenement, finds the children playing with a pile of twenty-dollar gold pieces.



T has been said there are three equal divisions of

the poor—God's poor, the devil's poor, and the poor devils, but in John Clarke's opinion God's poor far outnumbered the other

two divisions combined, and Clarke knew all about the subject that several years spent as a charity worker in Toronto's "Ward" could teach him. He knew only too well what money-and the lack of it-meant. He realized that the hunger for gold is the most consuming of all human passions, one that has led men to their deaths in the waste places of the earth, their bony hands still clutching a burden of the precious metal. For it men have sacrificed their health, reputations and even the happiness of their loved ones. For it women have sold their honor. Yet before the night was done he was to visit a poor woman of the slums for whom life contained something infinitely more precious, and who would offer freely to renounce both gold and life to hold her honor clean.

That night Clarke had sought the shelter afforded by the doorway of a bank at the corner of Dundas and Chestnut streets. The wind of late Autumn howled around the corners and seemed to pierce his very bones, and a gusty downpour added to his discomfort. The cars were slow and Clarke looked around him in disgust as he shrank farther into the bank entrance.

In contrast with the ornate front of the bank, the rest of the neighborhood looked extremely shabby. A tiny shop opposite exhibited one small show window on which some amateur craftsman had painted in white a cock and a hen, together with a Yiddish legend proclaiming that live fowl were kept for sale. As if to confirm the statement, a startled cackle arose within. The odors of an Italian fish-shop next door mingled with the mysterious smells of a Chinese laundry, and behind the uncurtained windows of the squalid little houses the polygot population went about their evening tasks.

We have a series of stories written by different authors around the above situation. The following is the first of this interesting series which will appear in The Quill. The second will appear next month. It is entitled "The Heritage" and is from the pen of Stanley E. Gladwell, author of "Of Common Type." — The Editor.

In one room a bearded, skull-capped patriach of Israel read his paper by the light of a smoky oil lamp, and the seven-branched candlestick of his religion stood on a rickety sideboard behind him. In another chamber a fat woman

rocked with a dingy shawl-wrapped bundle in her arms and crooned a Slavonic lullaby. A cat, in the shelter of a second-hand bottle dump, added the one genuine Canadian note to the noises of the night. And always, indoors or out, in spite of storm and cold and filthy streets, the feet of little children pattered and their shrill clamor rose above the swish of the rain and the guttural murmur of their elders.

It was a familiar scene to Clarke, and an uninteresting one. He wished fervently his car would arrive.

His thoughts were suddenly broken by the sound of someone running at top speed. There came a sharp tug on his coat. He looked down to find before him a breathless and excited boy who panted:

"Will you go an' see me mudder?" He gave the address of a house in the next street. "I can't stop;" he explained "de bulls is after me."

Clarke gazed at him in surprise. The boy was ragged, but for all that seemed a bit above the ordinary street urchin — a little cleaner, perhaps—and he had a way of looking one straight in the eye which did not belong to the usual sneak thief.

"Certainly I'll go and see her," Clarke promised, "but why are the police after you? Here, come back!" he added, grasping the youngster's coat as he turned to run.

"Never mind me," the boy answered. "I gotta go, but you'll see me mudder, won't you? I think she's dyin'," and with a quick wriggle he left the coat dangling in Clarke's hand and sped on, his skinny legs twinkling in the lamplight.

Half a block down the street "de bulls" got him and Clarke watched his removal in a big shiny patrol wagon—a great deal of



fuss over one poor, ragged little kid, he

thought with a sigh.

There was something about the boy that had appealed to Clarke. His evident concern for his mother made a very favorable impression, and he had seemed straightforward and a little out of place in his surroundings. He felt sorry for the little fellow and determined to find out the cause of his anxiety without delay. He stuffed the tiny jacket into a pocket of his raincoat and started.

His quest led him to one of the poorest houses in the district, one little better than a shack, that stood slightly back from the street, wedged between a pawn-shop and a shed. The door was slightly ajar and a single gas jet burned dimly inside. A single window was curtained with newspaper, and a broken pane had been repaired by stuffing a bundle

of rags into the opening.

The house seemed deserted. Each passing gust of wind swung the door to and fro with a melancholy squeaking of rusty hinges, and a loose board on the roof hummed like a harpstring. Clarke splashed his way across the muddy yard and climbed the dilapidated steps.

Perfect silence reigned as he paused to listen. Not even the ticking of a clock came to his ears, and a little shiver, bred of neither cold nor storm ran through him. Was he too late, he wondered. He pushed the door open slowly and looked in. The room was absolutely bare, except for a rusty stove. The cheap paper hung in streamers from a discolored ceiling. A musty, damp odor pervaded the place. A door opened from the opposite side and he stepped to it and rapped sharply.

IN answer to his knock a feeble voice called "Come in," and he entered a room nearly as bare as the first, and quite as cheerless, but one that somehow, in spite of utter desolation and abject poverty, gave the impression of being clean. A woman lay on a miserable bed in one corner. At one time she had possessed more than her share of good looks, but he could see even in the half light that hunger and disease had done their work well. Her face was pinched and her eyes sunken, with an unhealthy flush on the cheeks. She seemed only half conscious.

There were several children lying about the floor, but he paid scant attention to them

as he hastened to help the woman.

The fire had been out for days, but former experiences had warned him to go prepared for just such emergencies, and he soon had a cup of hot beef tea simmering on his spirit lamp. To this he added a spoonful of good brandy—supplied by a medical friend. The woman drank eagerly.

Some of the children had wakened and

were standing near Clarke as he sat by the bed, looking on with wide-eyed curiousity. He took a few biscuits from his bag and offered them to the little fellows. They were accepted readily enough, but to his surprise were merely nibbled and soon put down and forgotten. The children of this starving woman were not even hungry!

She was reviving under the influence of the food and stimulants and again claimed his attention. The children squatted on the floor, chewing their biscuits or playing. The woman's eyes met his and she smiled gratefully.

"How long since you have eaten?" he asked gently.

"I don't know; about a week I reckon." The voice was sweet and unexpectedly refined for such surroundings.

"But these children are well fed. They won't eat the food I offer them and you are starving! Why in the name of sense is that?"

Her eyes wavered a moment, then met his steadily, though a painful flush stole over her face. "Charlie—that's my oldest boy—he brought it. That's why he went—why they took him away. You needn't think too hard of him; I told him to do it. I couldn't let my children starve, could I?"

"What about you? Wasn't there enough

to go round?"

"I stole for the kids; I'm not a thief for myself. The children are different, don't you think so?"

"Well," Clarke began in his best reformer tone, "we all know it is very wrong to steal." Then the ridiculousness of such a statement to a person in her position struck him and he added more kindly "but if I had a family they would be fed all the same, and I really believe I should have a bite myself. I think you are carrying honesty a little far."

The woman looked greatly relieved. "Oh

thank you," she murmured.

Clarke smiled to himself rather sardonically. Such honesty is all right to speculate over, seated before a blazing fire after dinner, but hunger is a powerful sedative to conscience. Of course she would steal food for her children. What woman worthy of the name would not? But to pretend that she was too honest to take her share—that was a little more than he was able to believe. Yet her condition and the condition of the children bore out her statements, and she appeared truthful and sincere. It was a strange situation.

Still puzzled, he produced his notebook and jotted down the facts of the case. He discovered nothing except that her husband had been in hospital for several weeks, and she had never been in difficulty of any kind before.

As he prepared to leave he took another look at the children, but there seemed nothing to do for them. They appeared healthy, happy and well fed. One little girl sat on a rickety chair, as close to the flickering gaslight as she could get and tried with unskilled fingers to mend a tear in her dress. Clarke paused beside her and laid his hand on her curly hair. She looked up with a smile, but his face had turned suddenly very grave and somber as he reached past her and lifted a beautiful silk gown from the back of her chair. He fingered the glossy folds in silence, then turned to the woman on the bed.

"Is this yours?" he asked sharply.

Her glance swept the gown disdainfully and finally rested on his face. She shook her head.

"How did it come here?" he insisted. "One doesn't expect to find a new silk dress in a place where people are starving, you know."

"It was brought here," she answered, and from the way her lips shut in a hard line, he knew he would secure no further information from her that night.

He cursed himself for a fool. This was the woman so honest she would not eat a stolen crust to save herself from starvation! As he thought of how easy he had been, the boy's flight and subsequent arrest took on a different meaning. Apparently he had been after more than mere food for his starving brothers and sisters!

He was about to make a few caustic remarks when the door was thrown open and a man entered. He favored Clarke with a black scowl, jerked the gown from the table where it had been dropped, and threw it across his arm. He was dressed in a cheap, flashy style and Clarke presumed the dress belonged to him, particularly as the woman made no protest.

THE man strode to the bed. Clarke wondered if he would have her arrested, and rather hoped not. Even if she were a thief, she was ill and had a family of little children depending on her. At last the man spoke and his first words caused Clarke considerable astonishment.

"Well, Jane," he said in a rasping, unpleasant voice, "When are you going to quit bein' such a fool?"

Her face turned a shade paler, but her eyes never wavered. She answered him in one word.

"Never."

He turned with a snarl and glanced about the room. The youngest child, a cute little fellow of two years, had wakened with the rest and sat on the floor playing. The man went to him and picked up several small objects with which the child had been amusing himself. These he carried to the light and counted. Then he placed them on the table, glared suspiciously at Clarke and marched back to the child.

Clarke's eyes strayed to the table and he gasped in astonishment. The objects were twenty-dollar gold pieces! He drew a step closer and counted them swiftly. Nineteen of them! Nearly four hundred dollars in this miserable hovel! As soon expect ice-water in the Sahara!

A protesting cry from the baby attracted his attention and he turned to see the man wrench another of the golden disks from a small fist, and administer a push which toppled the little fellow backward. The baby's head thumped solidly on the floor.

Clarke stepped forward and placed himself squarely in the fellow's path.

"I advise you to handle that baby a little more carefully," he said through clenched teeth. "Is that your own stuff you are taking?"

"Another small-beer reformer, eh?" sneered the man. "I'll advise you to stir your own broth and I'll stir mine—and yours too if I need it." He brushed rudely past Clarke, picked up the rest of the coins and turned again to the bed.

"Jane," he said, and his voice lost something of its harshness as he addressed her, you've seen I got the coin an' the goods. I've left this stuff here for three days. Why won't you be sensible?" He placed one hand gently on her arm. She drew back with a jerk.

"Won't you please get out of here and leave me alone?" she asked. "I don't want the stuff and I won't take it. This is my house. Get out!"

"But, Jane . . ."

"Get out!" she cried with all the strength of her weak voice. "Go 'way! Leave me alone!"

The man's dark face turned a dusky red and the veins bulged on his forehead. He jumped to his feet and his discolored hand smacked sharply against her unprotected cheek! One of the older children cried out shrilly.

Clarke had no sympathy with a thief, man or woman, but his Anglo-Saxon soul revolted at the sight of this wanton brutality. With a bound he was beside the fellow and his powerful grip fell on the man's shoulder.

"Get out of this," he grated. "If this woman has your junk you know what to do about it, but I'll see you keep your dirty paws to yourself."

His answer was a vile epithet and a terrific swing at his jaw. However, Clarke was too old a hand to be caught in any such way, and burdened with his raincoat as he was, he sidestepped adroitly and his fist landed solidly on the middle button of his opponent's vest. He was rewarded by an agonized grunt, and followed up his advantage with an equally vigorous uppercut. The result was most satisfactory-from Clarke's point of view-and the unwelcome guest dropped on the floor. He was down, but far from being out, and Clarke lost no time in making preparations for a renewal of the conflict.

His chief concern was for the kiddies, and he stepped to the door of the front room, pulling off his raincoat as he went. Here he paused, waiting for the fellow to rise, and as soon as he was on his feet, Clarke slipped into the empty room.

The stratagem worked beautifully, for with a hoarse bellow the man sprang through the door, murder written on his face. Evidently his opponent's chief concern was that Clarke should not slip out of the house, and he placed himself near the front door. suited Clarke exactly, and with no children underfoot he set himself for a very busy and enjoyable session. His fighting blood was up and he intended to see this ruffian got all that was coming to him.

Clarke was a first class amateur boxer. His opponent knew nothing of the game. He expected an easy victory. But he soon discovered that boxing under Queensbury rules, and rough and tumble fighting with an unscrupulous tough were very different matters. He found himself pitted against a man who used hands, feet and teeth, and who apparently had never heard that a blow under the belt is a foul and disqualifies the man delivering it from further participation in the bout. At the end of two minutes. Clarke was weak, bleeding freely, and had lost all idea of giving the stranger a boxing lesson. He threw science to the winds and went in to win any way he could.

It commenced to rain stovepipes and plaster. The three-legged stove went over with a crash. A stinging blow caught Clarke on the side of the head and he staggered back amid a swarm of dancing stars. His hand, flung out for support, came into contact with the rusty poker. He seized it and struck with all his might at his rushing enemy. He never knew where the blow landed, but he dimly realized that somewhere it had found a mark, and he rained blow after blow on the unprotected jaw. Weak as he was, his punches still had some power behind them, and with a feeling of intense relief he saw his opponent wilt. He redoubled his efforts and the fellow went down and out.

Clarke leaned against the wall, utterly exhausted, and gasping for breath. The children were crowded into the inner door, peering at the scene with wide eyes. Clarke smiled at them reassuringly. The older ones smiled back.

His breath was coming easier and he felt the strength returning to his overtaxed muscles. The man on the floor stirred and sat up.

Clarke grasped him by the collar, heaved him onto shaky legs and sent him flying through the front door with a hearty kick. He landed in the front yard with a squelch of liquid mud and a jingle of golden coins.

Running feet pounded up the pavement and a shrill voice cried out as he attempted to rise, "Get him, mister!" it shrieked, "Dats de guy!" and Charlie appeared with a very large policeman in tow.

Clarke leaned against the doorway and

regrded them in surprise.

"Where did you come from?" he said. "I

thought you were arrested."

Charlie grinned back. "I was," he answered, "but de guy dat lost de stuff was a good scout. He says its all right, an' I told de bulls-I told Mr. Cop here dat dis guy was botherin' me mudder an' he come."

"What's the charge?" asked the officer.

"I'm laying against him a charge of assaulting a sick woman," Clarke informed the officer, "And I shall be down to the station in a few minutes to swear out the information. He may lay a charge of theft against her, but I'll see you about that later. You know me."

The officer grunted. "Glad to have something on this fellow," he said. "He's a bad actor, but he's been too sharp for us so far. But I guess this will hold him for thirty days." He took a still firmer grip of his prisoner's collar and cheerfully departed for the nearest patrol box. His freckled face wore a beautiful smile and he whistled an Irish melody between his teeth. The prisoner did not whistle.

Clarke turned and made his way back to where the woman was lying.

"Was that his own stuff he took?" he asked abruptly.

She nodded.

"Who is he? Your husband?" "No he's a-just a friend."

Clarke laughed shortly. "Yes, he certainly acted like one. If all you friends are like that you must have a most enjoyable time. Now look here," he went on, "you are evidently in trouble with this man. You admit the stuff belongs to him, though I fail to understand why he left it with you three days if he knew where it was. He is angry, and PURE GOLD THE QUILL

I am sorry for you in your sickness, and more sorry for your family, though I don't think much of your ways of getting money. Still, if you are arrested, let me know, and for the children's sake I will try to make it as easy as I can for you. I am pretty well acquainted

The woman turned her face to the wall and began to sob convulsively. The excitement of the fight had apparently broken down what little reserve of nervous strength she possessed.

with the police."

"I thought you would understand, you bein' a man," she cried, "I never stole for myself in my life an' I didn't eat what Charlie stole for the kids, an' I didn't steal the dress

will likely lay a charge of theft against you or the money. They were brought here. He n sorry for you in your sickness, and more brought them."

"He? Oh you mean that fellow. Is he anything to you?"

She picked nervously at the tattered covers for a moment.

"Don't you unlerstand, mister? He wants me to go away with him. He wanted me to use his money so's he'd have a hold on me." Her thin hand gripped Clarke's arm hard. "Oh, mister, my life's fair been a Hell since my man went to the hospital six weeks ago."

Then Clarke realized that all gold is not carried in purses, but that much of it finds an abiding place in the hearts of men and women, and he vowed that a brighter day should dawn for the little mother in her tenement.

THE third story of this series entitled "The Root of All Evil," is from the pen of Joyce Percy and will appear in our December number. There are six stories in the complete series.

We want our readers' opinions of these stories and we will award a prize to the one who sends us in the best criticism of the series.

The prize will be announced in a later issue.—The Editor.



# At the Meeting of the Waters

By EDWARD P. BUTLER

Few writers have the ability to write a psychological character study and couple it up with a strong and unusual plot. We believe Mr. Butler has done this.



AKE me away, John. Please. See how terrible the River is!—See how it boils and rages where the Creek is tearing into it! It is angry, John, angry at us; and I

am afraid. Take us away. Please. Please, John."

One great arm was about her shoulders; with the other he turned her face from the window and pressed it to his heart, hiding the view from her eyes. He spoke swiftly and quietly. I do not remember—if I ever knew—what he said; but his words must have eased her a mind a little, for she looked up into his face and smiled.

Of such scenes is memory born. That is my earliest picture of Mother—standing there in my father's arms and watching the swollen rivers. Jo was only three then. I remember, the same evening, throwing the old rusty knife that struck him on the head; and I can see him now, looking out from under his bandage and gazing with wonder at the actions of our parents.

Jo and I were not born there. Fifteen miles away, at the mouth of the greater river, lies a little town, a thriving seaport, where the masts of foreign schooners once gave to the harbor the appearance of a half-submerged forest bereft of its foliage. There may still be seen the old frame building where my father practised law; and on the hill, a little farther back, the cottage to which, thirty years ago, the young lawyer brought his bride and where Jo and I came into the world.

It is said that my father was "queer" and had "funny ideas." That is more or less true. But had the good man been able to resist the folly of spoiling a first-rate theory by trying to put it into practice, the world had never known his weakness. This, however, was not the case, and so the "funny ideas" became public property; and while few outside the circle of his intimates lost or gained by them, everyone seems to have been interested. The strange thing about it all is, that the most important of these theories—the one that brought us, at once the greatest suffering and the most good—has aroused the least comment.

One rainy morning in August he expressed to my mother his conviction that town was no place to rear children. I have good reason to believe that mother fought this "idea" in the very beginning; not that she doubted the truth of the dogma but because she feared the extreme to which it would inevitably lead. She must have known by that time that, when father put a new "idea" into words, it would be only a question of days until he would have to "try it out." But whether or not my suspicions are correct, it matters nothing, for the close of September found our little family buried in the forest.

Fifteen miles is a short distance nowadays—even in the country. But at that time the world was much younger than it is now. The town was small and depended almost entirely for its existence on the great timber-lands that lay immediately behind. The outlying farms were little, few, and scattered; and there were no roads as we know them now—only the rough trails of the lumbermen. Fifteen miles was the distance that father was to ride—or walk—to his office every morning. He had as yet no intention of dropping his profession to take up potato-culture.

Our new home served its purpose. The dangers of civilization were swept completely out of sight. There was not another family within miles. On all sides the wooded hills rose, lofty and opaque. Two great streams that seemed to spring from the foot of the overlapping mountains swept sharply down on either side of the comfortable frame house, and meeting about a hundred yards from our door, became the River. Both these streams had names but no one ever used them. One tributary came to be regarded, because of its position, as the true continuation of "The River" and so that designation sufficed for both. The other branch was "The Creek," a misnomer indeed, for The Creek was just as large and carried quite as much water as The River; and, in due season, was equally peaceful and harmless, equally turbulent and dangerous.

Mother has told me much of those first months in the forest. They were dull. The little excitement of moving—not the happiest activity in the world—a few colored weeks of Autumn, and then—the white unbroken silence of Winter. There would be a little stir in the morning when father started for town, or returned in the evening. Clyde, "the hired man," who had nothing to do, would spend most of the day trying to make up his mind to desert and get a "man's job" in the lumber camps up the River. Mother had no time to be bored. She had no assistance in the duties of the house and, with two young children to care for, found every moment occupied.

"But the nights! How often I lay awake when everyone else was sleeping! Your father, worn out by his long, hard day, would come in with scarcely energy enough to undress. He would drop into bed and sleep till I called him in the morning. There would be a cold nightmare of a moon staring in through my bedroom window. Or it would be dark; and those terrible howlings from the forest would seem to be just in the door yard."

"And the Banshee! One never got used to the lynx. I could jest about it in the day-time, call it the Banshee, and cheerfully wonder who was going to die next; but when night came and that weird cry broke through the darkness, I could not conceal my terror. I used to be ashamed of myself; your father

was afraid of nothing."

"Take me away!" They were the first words, in memory, I ever heard. How often had mother uttered that prayer before? I cannot tell. Nor will I attempt to explain the strange fear that sent her pleading to my father's arms that night. No one who has not beheld the Springtime fury of those clashing waters can have any idea of the effect it has on one who sees it for the first time. Besides, I think it was something more than the atmosphere of the place that frightened mother. It was our first Spring in the new home; we had lived through one cold Winter without accident and mother should have become well inured to her surroundings in that time; but as I cannot even recall the spanking she gave me for opening Jo's head that afternoon, I can scarcely be expected to know all that was then going on in her mind. But I do know that father's words soothed her and brought a smile to her eyes that was still there when she tucked Jo and me into bed and gave us our Goodnight kiss.

JO and I slept together. Our room was next to that of our parents and a doorway between, which was never closed, eliminated all danger of our being stolen away by the strange and terrible things that came out of the woods at night to look for little boys.

I do not know what the hour was, but it

was very dark and I was greatly frightened. I was going to waken Jo; but then—mother would not like it. I pulled the clothes over my head and tried to sleep again. It was no use. I began to wonder what had awakened me.

Then it came. Someone has likened that how to the cries of the damned. There is no earthly thing that can be compared to it. Of the countless hideous voices one may hear in the forest, that of the lynx is the only one to which one never becomes thoroughly accustomed.

My first impulse was to run to mother but before I could do so there was an answering scream from the other room that terrified me even more.

I heard father speaking as if just wakened:

"What is it, Beatrice?"

There was no answer. He rose and turned up the light. I saw mother standing in the middle of the room. Her beautiful, black hair was hanging loose; her hands were clasped tightly over her bosom; and in her bright eyes there was a look of terror, such as I have not seen since. Father went to her and put his arms about her. She did not seem to notice him.

"What is the matter, Bee?" he asked for the second time.

But his answer came from the forest. That demon of the wood was calling again. Mother gave a little cry.

"Hush Beatrice dear. It is only the lynx.

There is nothing to be afraid of."

Mother's face took on a softer expression. She seemed to relax, allowing her weight to rest in the supporting arms of my father.

"It is not only that, John," she said. "It's something — I don't know — It's — everything. Oh John, I am afraid. Won't you take us away? I have tried to get used to it but it is hopeless." She straightened in his arms, turned to face him, and put her hands on his shoulders. "You must take us away, John. You must! I am afraid I will go mad."

Here again, the picture grows misty and indistinct. There was much more; and I listened for every word. But there was little that I remember. Perhaps I did not understand what they were saying. Those excited words of my mother ring in my ears as if spoken yesterday. With my father's quiet speech it is different. Of it hardly a word remains in my memory.

Mother came in later to see if Jo and I were sleeping. I told her I had heard the

banshee.

"The banshee is gone," she said. "You are not afraid, are you, Bun?"

I said "No."

Then I asked: "Is we goin' away Mum?"



"No dear. Go to sleep now; -don't wake

The light was turned down again. In a

little while I was asleep.

The bright and friendly rays of a Springtime sun came creeping over the hilltops to open the eyes of two sleeping children. After the nightmares that preceded it that sun might have foretold a happier life to come.

Jo rubbed his eyes and sat up in bed.

"Where's Mum?" he asked.

"Mum and Pop is downstairs," I said. "Jo's hungry. "Won down."

Father was sitting at the head of the table. Mother was at his elbow. She was very angry. We had never seen Mum cross before.

"-And all for this crazy notion of bringing up children in the woods," we heard. "I am sick of begging and praying. I will take

the boys and go to my mother's."

Father's face had a kindly look but he gave no sign of yielding. That was father. He always had his own way, but he never was cross-not with Mother.

"Summer will be here in a few days, Bee," he said. "The water fell a good fourteen inches last night. In a little while everything will be beautiful and you will be glad to be here."

Once more our hopes were crushed. Jo and I had begun to wonder about the town. What was it like? It must be a wonderful place, since mother wanted so much to go there. Wouldn't it be great if we all went there to stay! But now even Jo and I knew that she had lost again.

She turned and saw us standing in the doorway. She kissed us both Goodmorning and took us out to the kitchen. It was warmer there. She made us sit by the stove for our breakfast. We were hungry and wouldn't be washed or dressed before we had eaten.

Clyde brought the horse to the door. Father came out to the kitchen dressed for his ride. In the crook of one arm he held the bag in which he carried his books. He took mother's arm with his free hand.

"You must stop fretting, Bee," he said. "You will be sick. Take the kiddies out for a run. It will do you good. The sun is glorious this morning."

She did not answer him. She was still angry. He kissed her quickly and was gone. We saw him cross the trestle and mount the hill to the River Trail. Mother drew us away from the window and made us finish our breakfast.

We did not get our run that morningmother was too busy. About the middle of the afternoon we decided it was useless to wait longer and determined to go without her.

HOW we got out of the house no one ever knew. We ran down along the Creek, looking for "holes." Just as we reached the River, Jo exclaimed enthusiastically of the hole formed there, and before I could realize what was happening, he jumped into the cur-

He did not sink at all. The swiftness of the freshet bore him up till he was swept out of sight around the "turn" of the river.

I remember running for Clyde, yelling: "Jo's lost! Jo's lost!" He knew, of course, what had happened, and, in a few moments, was swimming with the current till he too disappeared.

Then I ran to tell mother. No need to speak of that. Child as I was, I will never forget how strange she looked. There was not a tear that night-no excitement-only that deathly atmosphere of tragedy and its unearthly influence.

Clyde came in about half an hour. He

was limping.

"I didn't see a sign uh him, fer's I went," he said to mother. "I wudduh kept on but I coudn't swim any more."

"You hurt your arm!" mother said. Then I noticed that one arm hung helpless at his

"Yes, ma'am," he answered, "I smashed it in a run uh logs. I'll git it patched up in town. I'll hev tuh go there fer the boss soon's I kin git hold uh some men."

He lost no time. He wouldn't even wait to put on dry clothing. There was an extra horse in the stable; Clyde saddled him and

started for the nearest camp.

In a little while, a crew of some sixty lumberjacks and river-drivers were making rafts in sight of the house. When my father came they floated down the river with their grappling-irons strung behind. It was dark when they left and I suppose I was put to bed soon

My next recollection is of an army of river-drivers coming over the hill the following morning with their pike-poles on their shoulders. They crosesd the trestle from the other side of the river and stopped a minute or two at the house. I ran out to see them. One big man came over to me, bent his head to my ear, and whispered: "Jo's found."

Then mother came out and I heard him

"We didn't ketch him last night, ma'am. We drug that river right tuh the sea. We 'bout gave up hopes uh findin' him, but Denny Mutch, what was stragglin' behin' on the shore, come along with the little un in his arms. He found him hangin' to a bit uh timber be his dresses, on the bank uh the river. Course, yuh see, we missed him in the dark."



He paused, slipped a hand into his bosom, and brought out a blue-and-white rag that was Jo's hat. "I found thet last night ma'am," he said. "I was thinkin' yuh might like tuh hev it."

Mother thanked him and asked where was father.

"He's bringing the kid up in a canoe," he answered. "The water's all gone. The river's smooth's a pond this mornin'. There wun't be much drivin' after now."

A little later father carried into the house Joi—dirty and wet and cold, with his eyes shut and his curls all twisted and muddy; and that scar on his forehead where my knife had struck him two nights before.

There was something queer in the way mother snatched him from my father's arms. I did not like that; it was not the way she had taught Jo and me to take things—besides, Jo was no more her boy than father's; and father looked very worn and sad, while she didn't seem to be sorry at all.

But then I saw how mother kissed Johis white cheeks, his closed eyes, his wet, muddy hair. It seemed as if she could not get him close enough, so tightly did she hold him. Then I knew how mother loved him and that she was sorry too.—But why didn't she cry? And why was she so bad to father?

It was some time before she spoke. "I hope you are satisfied?" she said. "Beatrice?"

"Yes, you know what I mean. Your precious ideas! What good are they now? You have kil—" She broke off uncertainly. "Yes," she continued, "it is you—you have killed my baby."

I will not attempt to describe the look that came into father's face. Perhaps it is unnecessary—except to say that he was not angry. He hesitated, took a step forward, turned, and left the room.

I wanted to tell mother then. I knew I should, but I was afraid. She was not like mother at all. Later in the day, when father came to ask where they would put Jo, she told him, angrily, to bury him wherever he liked, that he would do that anyway. Once more, I was going to speak but became frightened by that queer hard look in her eyes, and so, lonely and tearful, went off to put in the day by myself.

It was late that afternoon. Wandering randomly about the house, I came upon father—standing by the window in his room. He looked terribly hurt and sick, and didn't notice me when I came in. It was then I determined to go to mother.

I FOUND her in the parlor, alone. She still looked queer but did not seem to be

cross, like she had been in the morning. I was a little afraid at first, but mother said:

"Do you want to see, Jo?"

I said "Yes."

She lifted me up so that I could see into the box which was on the table.

There was Jo, not as I had seen him that morning, but clean and white. He had on a new white dress. His hair had been washed and curled again, and the scar was covered with some kind of white stuff that mother had put on it.

I did not look long. I had not come to see Jo. Besides, mother was holding me, and I was too big for that.

"Mum," I said when she let me down. "Why is you bad to Pop? Pop didn't kill Jo. Jo jumped in the brook.—I saw him."

What followed was, of course, mystery to me; even yet I am not sure that I understand it.—Why should mother kiss me just then, when she had not spoken to me all day? And what could be the reason for her crying now, when, in all the hours that had passed since Jo was lost, she had not shed a tear?

Her convulsive sobbing must have roused father, for he came in and took her in his arms, just as he had been used to do.

It was long before she was quieted. For a moment, when she saw father, she seemed very frightened. Then, catching furiously at his shoulders and looking into his eyes, she said:

"John, I'm sorry I said that awful thing to you, this morning. I didn't mean it at all. I didn't know what I was saying. Won't you try to forget it?"

"I'm afraid I can't, Bee," he said quietly. "You were right. It was all my doing—"
"No—No—John. Don't think about it.
Promise me you won't blame yourself. It was
my fault. I should have been more—"

"Hush Bee! You couldn't have prevented it. We will blame God and let it go at that."

Then mother began to cry again. I thought she would never stop. But at last she was calm, and father spoke

"I've been thinking a lot to-day, Bee," he said. "I might have known you would never get to like this place and it was cruel of me to keep you here. I was going to bury Jo under that big spruce but perhaps it will be better to take him to town. I will move you out as soon as I can get a decent house."

"Oh John! You—" There was joy in the exclamation but she broke off as quickly as she began. Her face became very serious. I could see that father was no less puzzled than I.

"What?"

"I-I don't know. I thought I was glad,



John, and I am too, glad because you are so good, but—"

"But what, Bee?"

"John, you would like to stay. Wouldn't vou?"

"No, Bee, I couldn't; not now. I could never be happy here knowing how you hate \_\_"

"But if you knew I didn't hate it at all?"
"You don't expect me to believe that, af-

ter all these months?"

"I know John. But there is something I don't understand about that. Yesterday, when —when it happened, I thought it must have been a—well, Jo. But that is foolish! I was just crazy. You see, John,"—mother forced a little smile—"I've only been here—all here—for a few minutes. I've been very happy for that long, and I think I'm going to like it fine. Won't you give me a chance?"

"God, Bee! After all I've made you suffer. And you're ready to-No! Not-"

"John. Please. You can think of nothing now but to make me happy, but haven't I an equal right to your happiness? You want to take me away where you know you would be just miserable and I no better off."

There was a long silence. Mother seemed

very uneasy. Suddenly she asked:

"Would this valley be any good for farming?"

Father started. He was almost angry. "How did you know?" he asked.

"Know what?"
"Oh—nothing."

"No, John, tell me. You were thinking of it, weren't you?"

"No."

Not often is one happy as mother looked just then. I think that some such glory lit the eyes of Christians in the Coliseum.

"I'll forgive you that fib, John, because I know why you told it, and because it is a fib and I'm glad of it. But now you must tell me the truth. How far has it gone?"

"I was going to give up my rooms."

"Then you'll be here all the time! Don't you see how that fixes everything? It was awful, John, you being away so far. And that ride! I was afraid that some night you would never come home." She seemed to choke for a moment. "It will be wonderful, John. I won't ever want to go away again."

There were more tears then, soft and silent, and father did not try to stop her. They stood quietly together looking out of the

window.

The evening sun, slowly sinking, clung to a peak of the great hill before us. Dusk was creeping into the valley, obscuring the more distant course of the rivers.

"Look!" she said. "The freshet is gone!
—See how calm the River is under the trestle.—Only a ripple at the meeting of the waters. Don't take us away, John. I'm not afraid any more. The river is not angry now. And Jo—we will keep him here, with us, under the big spruce tree."

Then father kissed her again and went off

to his room.

Mother drew me close; and we sat and watched 'till darkness hid the meeting waters from our eyes.

IF you like THE QUILL recommend it to your friends.

Send us the names of those whom you think would be interested and we will mail them sample copies.



# The Nickel Napoleon

### By RON BRAMBER

His total capital was Five Cents—and an idea. This story is a choice piece of humor and underlying the fun is some good, solid sense.



OU will probably think I am mad," said my client.

I hastened to reassure him. "If you were mad," I told him, "you would be trying to prove to me

how sane you are. You're all right. What's

the idea?"

"I am down to my last five-cent piece, but I've got an idea that I can make my fortune with that. I want your opinion," replied my visitor.

I must admit I was staggered. True, I am a Business Administrator—and it's a fine profession, if I did invent it myself!—but I've got to have something more than a nickel to administrate. I made the best reply I could think of at the moment..

"With five cents and determination a fellow might accomplish anything," I said in my most impressive manner. "Of course, he must have a lot of determination."

"I'm determined all right," was the come-

back. "It's win or bust."

"They generally win when they're like that," I assured him. "What's your plan?"

"I have no plan," rejoined this astonishing client. "I am leaving that to you. I saw your ad., you know; the one that says, 'Beverley, Business Administrator. Anything Bought. Anything Sold. Anything Operated'."

"They all read that way," I replied, sparring for time, "and I certainly do a lot of buying for people; also selling. But I'll let you into a secret; my very lowest limit is five cents. Of course I might double your money, if you would consent to match me for it, but it's a gamble."

My visitor shook his head. He was a young chap with sunken cheeks and a dead-white complexion. Persons released from confinement look like that, but then so do bakers; and it turned out he was a pastry-cook, named Clountiss.

"I quit my job with just enough to pay two weeks board and room, and I have five

cents left," he explained.

"It's a margin of safety," I agreed; "good enough for a Rocky Mountain goat, anyway. But if I am to undertake the solution of this little problem you'll have to shine some limelight on the subject. Haven't you got even the germ of an idea?"

The man rubbed his hand over his pro-

minent cheek-bone and considered.

"I'm full of ideas," he said, "but I can't sort 'em out just right. For instance, I have discovered a way to make those little silver balls they put on wedding cakes good to eat. With my process they come out a little bigger than peas, and dissolve in the mouth deliciously."

"There is a fortune in it," I said, with intent to be humourous. "A chap made a pile of money not so long ago with things called 'gin-tees'—or words to that effect—so why

not you?"

He got quite excited about it. "Do you really think there is money in it" he said, eagerly, "could I make them popular?"

"With five cents?" I exclaimed, disgustedly. "Nit! Of course you might get someone to lend you space to show your goods. There's a friend of mine keeps a garage across the street who might let you have his window."

I was only fooling, but just the same a flicker of light began to penetrate the dark-

ness.

"See here," I said, "you're really serious, ain't you?" He sure looked it. "All right then; there is a general store a couple of blocks down the street, kept by a widow who might be glad to have you attract attention by a demonstration like yours. You hustle along and borrow a frying pan, or whatever it is you need, and I'll arrange to have the window cleared. You can likely get a charge account there for your materials if you put up your five cents as a guarantee, and I won't say but what she might even stake you to your grub, so that you can spread the rest of your wealth on room rent."

Honest, it was the best I could do, and it did look like a mutual help proposition. The widow was a practical little party, and I figured that this artist could attract some custom for her, anyway, making candy in the window. I had a sneaking hope that they might marry each other and share a joint oblivion, because, even if they do call me the 'piker promoter,' I wasn't ambitious just then to float 'Five Cent Fancies Unlimited.'

It seemed that the demonstration was quite a success, as far as attracting custom for the widow was concerned, because when I went in after a couple of days she looked quite busy. Clountiss was operating in the window, with a portable electric cooking contraption which



had been rented. He was dolled up in a flat baker's cap and white clothes, and he was entirely surrounded with dishes of silver globules, which, with their silvered surfaces, made me think that some fortune-teller's crystal globe had been laying eggs. Judging by the sign chalked on the window, he called them 'Silver Fizzes' being a pretty good name but a terrible disappointment when you found out what they were.

I tried one or two, and although they hadn't much taste, they certainly did have a nice cleansing effect on the mouth. They were selling, but not in any fortune-making quantities, and I felt kind of sorry for the poor simp, because he was game even yet; but I was in no mood to help much just then, for I had been getting rid of a long-haired lunatic who wanted me to promote a will-power gymnasium. Fact! He was as pompous as an owl about it, and nearly as feather-headed.

"My dear sir," he assured me, "this matter of success in life is just a question of sustained expectation; but this must be renewed every day by a conscious act of expectation, similar to the acts of faith or acts of contrition endorsed by the churches. On rising every morning a man should greet himself with approval. He should look in the glass, and thump himself on the chest, and consciously expect success. I say to myself every morning, 'I know that I shall soon achieve success!' and I can then face the day full of hope."

"Full of hops," I opined. "Say, why wouldn't it be all right for a fellow to wait until he gets to his job, and then thump that," but he waved the idea aside.

"It has been proved by famous psychologists," he insisted, "that if the first waking thoughts are concentrated upon the same object for a number of days, the mental faculties begin, subconsciously, to work for the attainment of that object with increasing strength. Now if we were to form an association"—but right there I told him I had just performed an 'act of expectation' for something to eat.

The curious thing about it was that I couldn't forget about him. I couldn't help comparing this chest-thumping specialist and his ideas with poor Clountiss. Here was a guy with an 'act of expectation' — plus five cents and willingness to work—out after success with both feet and a pair of hands, and not getting it. Then here was a lunatic with a notion—based on a scientific truth, make no mistake!—that he had only to wish for success hard enough and it would come to him; also not getting it. It made me feel—well, a pastel shade of blue, anyhow, until I got back

to the office and put my feet up on the old blotting pad.

It always cheers me up to look around my little office, because I can remember the time when I took a long chance myself and won. When I tacked the legend, Business Administrator' and the rest, on to the name of Beverly, all I had was one of those wonderful selling propositions that you wonder how anybody has the gall to sell. But I had it on the right terms and (what is funnier still) I proposed farming it out to my agents right. For I had gone into the business with a certain conviction that the thing that makes most of these outfits no good is the fat thing that sits in a chair and sucks up all the profit. The ideas are generally all right, and of real service to the public, or no one could hope to sell them: but the men who are out on the battlefront pounding doors can't make a living because they get the meatless end of the bone. That's a fool idea, because all the capital most men have is their energy, and they don't use that kind of capital much until they find somewhere they can sell it at par.

The consequence of my policy is, that as a Business Administrator, setting up to buy or sell or operate anything for anybody, I have the choicest collection of down-and-outs and half-up-and-nearly-ins for clients that can be imagined—but they swarm like bees when I put a proposition to them, for we trust each other. So, when I get into that office, I can generally persuade myself that things are not so bad but what they might be worse, and my think-stream begins to thaw out.

It was so on this occasion; for pretty soon an idea hit me such a wallop, that I had to take my feet off the blotter sudden, so as not to tilt over backwards and crack my bean.

I soon had brother Clountiss on the telephone. "Listen, Lester!" I said to him, "could you make those things of yours some bigger, and put on a little more silver polish?" He said he certainly could.

"Will your friend the widow still keep on staking you?" His answering splutter sounded affirmative, so I let it go.

"If I bribe a printer to set some jazz advertising, and some of my go-getters to sing it to customers, can they come in on shares?" And when he admitted that this was a reasonable guess I got busy.

I don't know that I need go into details. The boys sold about two million in a week, put up in fancy boxes, at twenty-five cents a hundred. They cost about two cents a hundred to manufacture and the boxes cost about as much; so a little figuring will show what there was in it.

But the effect on Clountiss deserves a word or two. As soon as he began to realize that

the thing was a success, it seemed as if a fire started to burn inside him. His pale cheeks filled out and fairly shone as if they had been polished, and his eyes got bright enough to make a debt-collector back up if he looked at him in anger. Nothing would stop him from beginning a nation-wide campaign, and he soon had fifteen crews sweeping across the country in a line, organized and directed with military precision from a field head-quarters. I ran across him once when I had to wait at a railway - junction town, where he had his field head-quarters in a little hotel. He was bending over a great map pegged out on the bed in his room, with his 'chiefs of division.' as he called his crew managers, around him; and he was pouring out a constant stream of orders, which one man wrote in a book while another moved the line of flags that marked the position of his 'divisions' on the map.

"Hello, Napoleon!" I said, but he glared at me with those fierce eyes of his, and growled

like a dog disturbed at a bone.

"Don't interrupt, sir, when I am planning my manoeuvres for to-morrow," he snapped;

and I didn't stay long.

Some people say he is crazy, but that fellow is only crazy like a fox. He just loves the business of making money, that's all! I asked his wife once, when I was up to their big house for dinner, if she did not find him a little trying.

"Not in the least," she told me. "You see, I found out when he was working in the window of my general store, in those first weeks, that he only requires to be let surge right ahead. Really he has some very clever ideas."

They all have to admit, though, that mine was the idea that first put the thing over. I

grabbed it whole from the long-haired lunatic who thumped his chest in the morning, and it is the basis of all their advertising. Here is one of the cards the salesmen always distribute for the window display the first week in a town, and you can trace the suggestion back to its source:—

### HAVE YOU SEEN YOUR FUTURE IN THE CRYSTAL GLOBE?

Every morning take from the box
The Ball of Fortune,
and while you watch the little pictures
dance on its silver surface

### WISH THE WISH NEAREST YOUR HEART.

Then swallow this Crystal Ball—this
Magic Potion.
Never miss a morning,
Never doubt your luck,

and

## BEFORE YOU HAVE FINISHED THE BOX

#### SOMETHING WILL HAPPEN

Send your friends a box for Luck, placing your own SECRET SIGN on the Tag.

There is a tag to each box, 'From your Mysterious Friend':—with instructions to sign with a shadow signature, folding the paper while the ink is wet so that the letters run together and form strange shapes.

Of course it succeeded. If people can be persuaded, while conscious, to swallow iron, and yeast, and lubricating oil, why wouldn't they eat a little optimism?

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# The Opera Cloak

By E. A. TAYLOR

We offer here a story of an unusual type—Read it carefully and write us your frank opinion.



HE cloak hung in the doorway of a third class store for second hand clothes. It had once been a lovely thing, pearl-grey, and lined with rose-colored satin. Now the grey

was dulled and worn, though the lining still showed a brave flush of color in that dingy store, on that dingier street, where everything looked dark and soiled.

It was past ten on a January evening, but the old clothes store was still open, and the storekeeper peered through his dirty window at the girl who walked with dragging feet, then stood still near his door, heedless of the sleety rain that was falling and freezing as it fell.

She was ill-clad for such weather. Her broken shoes were soaked. Her coat was but a red knitted thing, much the color of the lining of the cloak. Her cheap hat was a soggy wreck, but under it her hair gleamed a wonderful red-gold, and her young figure had an alluring grace, though her face was pinched and white, and her eyes looked as if she were half-drugged.

A man approached on the other side of the street. He was big and fair, and his walk showed the sailor. He was just drunk enough to long for some kind of lawless adventure, and he saw the girl. He crossed the street and spoke to her.

"I 'low you're the lass I've been a'lookin' for." His voice had the soft burr of English Devon speech, brought across the sea a century before, and salted with the brine of Newfoundland and Labrador.

She stared at him stupidly—"You—you—what's your name?"

"You're makin' a wonderful fuss!" growled the man, resenting her unreadiness to respond to him, "But I be Ole Derkson, and us is going to have a comfortable time together." He tried to put his arm around her, but she jerked away so fiercely that he stared at her. "What be the matter with you, lass?—just foolin' a bit?"

"I'm not your kind," she panted. "I'm not what you think! Go away. Don't you dare to put your hands on me!"

With that she started swiftly down the street, less afraid than angry, for a city factory girl has to learn how to take care of herself. Her resistance had aroused him like a

challenge to a fight and he followed, whispering coaxingly, though he had enough sense not to attempt to touch her again.

Right around the block she walked, back to the store where the cloak hung, then stood still, too worn-out to walk more.

"I'm not your kind," she repeated sullenly,

facing him

"You're the kind to my taste," he retorted. "Come, lass, I've a barb'rous hunger for my supper, and—" he pulled out a thick roll of bills—"they be enough to feed two."

She glared at the bills with the drugged look back in her eyes—and drugged she was that night, for hunger, fatigue and despair are a combination to match any dope in clouding the brain to moral ethics.

"Will you give me ten dollars?" she whis-

pered.

Instantly he peeled a twenty off, and put it in her hand. "I be no tight-wad," he cried boastfully. "Sure, girl, I'll give you—I'll give you—," he looked round uncertainly, and seeing the opera cloak, waved a mighty arm towards it and dived into the store.

For a moment the girl hesitated. She held the money she had gone mad with longing for, and she could have escaped while the man's back was turned. But she had a boyish sporting sense; no matter what madness she did that night, she could not rob this man. Raising her bright-haired head defiantly, she walked into the store.

The storekeeper was just taking advantage of Ole's fuddled condition to say the cloak was a dollar more than the price marked on the dirty bit of paper pinned to it. Very sharply the girl put him right, and then she counted the change before she let Ole pocket it. He chuckled as he put the gay, ragged cloak round her. "You do be a clever lass, sure; just to my taste."

HE took her to a place where they would serve late meals to a man who was obviously sober, and a soaked, shivering girl, whose cheap clothes were startlingly covered by the rags of a rose-satin cloak, for Ole had put it on her inside out.

Hot dishes were set before them. Though the girl—Rose she said her name was—had eaten nothing that day and very little for many days before, she could not eat now.



"You be fair done out," said Ole, as he filled a glass and pushed it to her.

"How funny you talk," said the girl, list-lessly. She had choked over the liquor in a way that showed it was her first glass, but it sent a flush to her cheeks, and a strange gleam to her eyes. Even then any sober man would have known that in spite of the boldness her factory life had taught her, the girl was really as innocent and as ignorant as a little child. So deeply ignorant was she, that when the lulling warmth of the liquor comforted her starved flesh, she forgot all her fears of the unknown, and began to eat and to talk, really believing that this big man who was befriending her would do her no harm.

Even to Ole's fogged brain, an instinct whispered that this girl was not what he had thought, when he saw her in the street, with the flaunting red of her hair and coat. But drink and passion drowned the whisper and he

filled the girl's glass again.

Her voice grew shriller and broken with many giggles, as she babbled on—"We call the boss at the factory Big Fat Lane, 'cos his name is 'B. F.' An' I bet you'd never guess the mean trick he done right after Christmas. Everybody had blowed their last cent having a swell time then, an' at five that Friday we got notice that the shop'd shut down for a month, starting right that night at six! Can you beat that for dirty meanness?"

Her eyes were very bright, but her speech began to get confused, and when Ole put his arm round her again, she only giggled inane-

ly.....

When it was too late he knew the truth, and it sobered him.

It was in the dead, cold hour between night and day. A grey light, like sifted ashes, lay on the roofs of the houses Ole could see spread out before the window, and black as sackcloth between them lay the darkness of walls and lanes.

The girl crouched on the floor with a look of horrible astonishment fixed like a white mask on her face. She was very quiet, staring with blank eyes at the opera cloak lying on a couch.

"What did youse do it for, lass?" The

man's voice was almost savage.

She stirred slightly. "B. F. shut the shop down, an' we hadn't nothing but bread an' tea to eat, and we hadn't got enough for the rent; so I went out—I dunno what for—I dunno—" she stopped as if she was too tired to talk any more.

Ole looked at her with a growing fear in his eyes. He had imagined living was very easy in the fat, pleasant land far from the sea. But now he knew there were as hopeless shipwrecks here as among the ice and fogs of the

Gulf, and it touched him to the quick that he had so misunderstood a signal of distress.

"The Lard God A'mighty heaves men to

hellfire for such-like," he muttered.

Then he squared his big shoulders resolutely. "Don't be so cast down, lass," he said coaxingly. "There'll be a fine plenty of parsons in a city like this, and us'll be wed right now."

"Wed?" said the girl stupidly. "Marry! Now!" she screamed the words, galvanized into tragic life, then burst into mad laughter.

Ole looked at her, horror-stricken, and picking her up he shook her and threatened to strike her. But she only laughed the more. He took her in his arms and tried to kiss her, but she fought him off so fiercely that he dropped her. And still screeching fearful laughter she dashed from the room. For the moment he was too dazed to follow; and when he rushed out, the noise of her laughing had stopped and he could see no sign of her. She seemed to have fallen out of sight into the gulf of darkness that still shrouded the city streets.

THE cloak hung on the door of Ole's hotel bedroom. He had just come in and, flinging himself on a chair he looked at it, and swore. For though three weeks had passed he had been unable to find the girl. He had advertised in all the papers: "Rose—it was all a mistake, please marry me"— and his name and address. But no answer had come, and Ole felt like a baited bull. He was a Newfoundlander but he had inherited his name and his big body and his reckless passions from some Viking forefather, and this was the first time he had been defied by anything he could not beat down with his fierce will or strong fists.

However, he had located the factory where "B. F. Lane" was manager, and he planned to go there in the morning and find out Rose's surname and address.

There was a tap at the door and a small

man entered, waving a newspaper.

"Mr. Ole Derkson?" he said in a narrow, precise voice that matched his face—the face of a male old maid. His clothes were well brushed and he carried an umbrella neatly and tightly rolled and he was a man whose soul and mind were just as neatly and tightly rolled up in strict propriety.

"Iss, I be Ole Derkson," the sailor an-

swered.

The small man glared at him with his pale

eyes-"Satyr!" he hissed.

"Iss, I be Satan, if you like, but I be a' goin' to wed the lass. An' I'm skipper an' part owner of the Roma, the best boat of her tonnage in the Gulf. An' I've a house with a



gran' garden, and goates and sheep. An' I 'low the lass'il-"

"You shall never, never, marry her," the small man shrilled.

"An' who be you that says I won't?" shouted Ole, balling his great fists, though the man before him was too small to strike, and besides, he was probably kin to Rose.

Words came out of the mouth of the small man like a torrent. He talked so swiftly and in the speech of cities that at first Ole did not understand him, but by listening hard he was able to see, as through a window, a city factory—a machine-made place quite beyond his mental horizon. Behind it was a "siding," where the small man worked, as freight-checker. "Iss, keeping tally o' fish an' things," muttered Ole, "I knows about that." The men at this factory came to work at seven, it seemed, and the girls at eight, and the freight-checker always looked up to see a girl who passed in a red coat that was like a gleam among the dull garments of the others.

Ole nodded. He knew now this man was Rose's lover, and he asked bluntly, "Why wasn't youse handy when the lass lost her anchor an' was a' drivin' right on the rocks o' Hell?"

The small man looked down, and he answered confusedly. Ole gathered that he wanted Rose, but he had waited, not sure that he wanted the burden of house-keeping. And he had shown his cold caution so plainly that Rose never dreamed of going to him in her distress.

Ole was pleased that Rose belonged to a world so narrow and proper, and though he winced at the thought of the agony her outflaming of passionate despair must have caused, he smiled contentedly as he said:

"Tis a bit too late to do it to-night, but I be a' goin' to wed the lass on the morrow."

"You shall never marry her," squealed the small man. "You can't. She drowned herself in Bay Street slip after—"

He stopped, frightened, for the smile on Ole's face had suddenly frozen. And because it is very horrible to look at a man who is suffering the extremity of torture, the small man ran away.

Left alone, Ole drank deeply, but the drunker he became the plainer he saw the face of a dead, drowned woman. Only the eyes were alive. They looked at him, as she had looked when she told him of "B. F. Lane"—the eyes of an ignorant, trusting child.

With a groan he sprang to his feet and, snatching up the opera cloak, he rushed out, a

The next morning a coroner's jury was investigating the death of Mr. Lane. Said a policeman, "I saw a biggish man pass about

2 a.m. I didn't see his face, but he carried what looked like a woman's dress, pink and grey silk, and he went down the side lane."

Further evidence showed that the dead man had sat up very late in his study and someone unknown ("But who had the strength and climbing powers of a gorilla," said the coroner) had scaled a high wall, and broken into the house by tearing a bolted door open. He then had seized Lane, carrying him out to the garage which he had also broken open; and, stifling his victim's shouts for help, he had beaten him with his fists. The blows, according to the doctor, were not sufficient to cause death, but the heart had given way. There was no robbery. The crime seemed absolutely purposeless—more like the act of a wild beast than of any human being.

So the puzzled court talked, and a small man standing by shivered, remembering that Ole was a sailor, and that he had the opera cloak. But he said nothing, and Ole was not suspected, though he believed he was, and fled from the city taking the cloak with him.

THE cloak hung just inside the cabin on a small steamer that limped-for her engines were badly damaged-through the sullen grey rollers of the Gulf of St. Lawrence. The ship (she was the Roma) pitched in the heavy sea and the cloak swung out of the cabin and whisked back again, like the skirts of a woman, who came in suddenly, and then fled. The two men in the outer cabin stopped in the midst of their low-voiced conversation and went up on deck. The elder was Job Kane, the white-whiskered mate, and the other was young Jim Cary the clerk or supercargo. Job was in command of the Roma for Ole Derkson, the captain, lay dying in his cabin.

This was in the second year of the great war, and the Roma, like everything else afloat in Canadian ports, had been turned loose with a big gun to get foodstuffs across the Atlantic if she could.

She could—several times. Then she met a Hun submarine off the American coast. She managed to sink him, but his shells had badly injured her captain and her engines. The latter had been patched up after a fashion that enabled her to crawl over a heaving grey sea. Overhead the sky was grey too, lit in one part with the pallid gleam that fishermen call "The blink o' ice."

The two men continued their conversation. "Iss," said Job, "He was sinful mad after the maids, sure, but he always carried a smile, an' he was a wonderful clever worker. Cook's b'y he started as, then cook, an' hand, an' mate, an' skipper. Then he took that cruise inland

and I 'low it was in a place of wickedness that he met she o' the silk cloak."

Jim nodded. He was thinking of the water-fronts of overseas ports, which had been a revelation of wickedness to the simple sailors of the Gulf, and being young himself, he wondered in what pageant of scarlet sin Ole had met the girl of the cloak, and what wild kisses of madness they had exchanged before the flames of the Pit they danced beside scorched reason from Ole's brain and he murdered her. For, naturally, this was what all Ole's neighbors believed of him. Had he not gone away, four years before, a young man, all smartness and jollity, and come back a silent, hunted man-with the opera cloak? Instead of chamming with his men in the forecastle, as is the easy way on the fishing ships when not on duty. Ole shut himself in his tiny cabin. And often on deck a man would be afraid when his captain would stop while speaking to him, to stare silently at something behind him which he could not see-and did not want to see. Men only sailed with him because he was still the smartest skipper on the coast.

And now he was dying. Slowly Jim Cary went below to relieve old Tom Finch, who

was watching by his captain.

"He have fell asleep?" Jim asked as he came in softly, but directly he saw that Ole's eyes were wide open, though he lay perfectly still. The agony of a strong body fighting against death was over. The conquered flesh was slowly letting go of life. Only the eyes were alive. Blind to all else, they were watching the cloak with a look of terrible expectation.

"He be a'waitin' for she to come for he," whispered old Tom with a certain relish which was not hard - heartedness. He was white haired, and close on eighty, but still vigorous enough for the strenuous work on the Roma. He always carried a pair of cheap field-glasses. "I'm troubled a wonderful sight with the failin' of my eyes," he would say. Perhaps this helped rather than hindered him from being the regular ghost-seer of those parts. "Uncle Tommy" saw ghosts early and often—at least he saw what he said were ghosts. And having sailed with Ole for long years he was slightly resentful because he had never been able to see the "ghostie of she" who haunted his captain. But he was calmly certain that soon now she would be visible to all.

Jim shrugged his shoulders contemptuously. He belonged to the young generation who went to High Schools and were familiar with wireless, and the superstitious old man irritated him.

But Tom's old eyes flashed angrily—
"Youse have schoolin' Jim rary, but youse

only a worm, a wee wrigglin' worm, in the sight o' Lard God A'mighty, and maybe He'll l'arn youse that ghosties be as much His creatures as you be."

Jim pretended not to hear, and as the old man left, he lit the swinging lamp, for it was growing dusk. The feeble, swaying light filled the cabin with strange, moving shadows and the whole ship was jarred by the irregular working of the patched engines which made weird noises, groans and pantings, instead of the steady powerful beat that spells strength to meet the rage of the sea.

Jim tried to think of the war and the latest news from the western front, but the old superstitions of his fathers, inherent in his blood, were beginning to touch his brain and he was growing afraid of being alone with this dying man who was waiting for a dead

woman to keep tryst with him.

The men on deck heard him shout as he flung himself so headlong from the cabin, that he fell with a crash on the floor outside. They found him on his knees by the table, clutching its leg, and he babbled fragments of prayers.

Job jerked him to his feet and shook him till he spoke in gasps: "A face above the cloak! A drowned, dead, woman's face! An' the eyes looked! Have mercy on us miserable offenders, an' incline our hearts—incline our

hearts-"

"Steady, b'y, steady," said Job, and without looking toward Ole's cabin he marched Jim up on deck and to the galley, where a pot of tea boiled day and night. "Nothin' like tea for gettin' under a man's skin an' heartenin' he up" said Job, as he forced the third large cup on Cary. And Jim was steady again, telling himself resolutely that he had seen nothing supernatural. "Tis what the skipper was a' thinkin' he saw; an' I was what the books call hypnotized by he."

"I 'low 'tis a sign the skipper's gone," said Job as he started for the cabin, the others fol-

lowing.

HE lay as if sleeping, his right round the cloak which was beside him in the bunk, and on his dead face was a half smile, as if, when what he had expected came, it was not terrible at all.

Only old Tom spoke. "The cloak—it was t'other side o' t' cabin. I 'low 'tis a ghostie that took it to he."

No one argued with him, and he, being the carpenter, hurried away to make a coffin. The dead man was left alone. It was past midnight when Tom brought up the rough plank box and Jim said sharply: "Dunderhead, 'tis a wonderful sight too wide."

"It be for two," the old man answered



briefly, and saying no more, Jim helped to carry it down.

The air was still, and very cold—the cold that tells of nearby ice. But the men who lifted Ole Derkson and the opera cloak into the coffin had sweat on their foreheads. Hastily, with averted eyes, they nailed down the lid, and brought the box to the deck, covered with the flag Ole had fought for. And then in the darkness that surrounded the Roma, "Out of the sea, mysteriously, the fleet of Death rose round."

Looming vast and spectral, one giant iceberg moved steadily towards the Roma, followed by a fleet of smaller, ghostly shapes, half-seen in the light of a waning noon.

Most men would not have risked stopping a ship with disabled engines when ice was so near, but they thought only of putting their dead captain—and the opera cloak—as quickly as possible into the sea which God made to hide so many things.

Standing by the rail Job, bare-headed, repeated the Lord's Prayer, and at the words—"Forgive us our trespasses," the coffin was launched into the deep.

The men on the deck stood very still. Ole had died believing he was going to the Pit of Eternal Burning, and these men all thought the same, only Job, whose heart was larger than his creed, stretched his hands out over the sea: "Man an' woman," he said solemnly, "I 'low youse sinned, but rest ye quiet in the tomb o' the Lard God A'mighty."

Then he gave the order to start the engines, but some over-strained part gave way, and while men franticly labored to repair it, those on deck looked helplessly at the ice clos-

ing round them.

The narrow, curved moon shone full on the great berg with a long, snow-heaped valley running up between its mighty cliffs which looked like a pass over the frozen mountains to some weird white world where the reddest passions of man would be bleached white in the eternal virginity of the snowy coldness.

The men on deck stood in a stolid group. Soon their helpless ship would be caught between the berg and the broken pan-ice and crushed like an egg-shell, and they stood silent and searched the sides of the berg for the best climbing places when Job would roar for them to take to the ice.

Only old Tom was looking high up, where the long cleft split the crest of the berg. Intently he tried to focus his uncertain glasses on Something. Then the glasses fell clattering to the deck, as he cried—"I do see un; 'Tis t' skipper up there, a 'kissin' o' she in the cloak, an'—"

"Pick up them glasses," ordered Job sternly. "An' look somewhere else. You be inquirin' too curiously into the ways of the Lard God A'mighty, when t' ship'll strike inside of ten minutes."

But the ship did not. The great berg, obeying the mysterious laws that govern the moving of the ice, veered off—like a ship when the passengers she waited for have come on board. And then the Roma's engines began to move and she escaped.

Quite unexcited, the men off duty went to their bunks. But Job and Tom stayed to look behind where, a dull white on the black water, they could still see the far-off ice. Both old men were thinking of the young man whom they had known, and loved, and buried that night. And at last Job said, "Was it the 'glory sight' youse had, when youse did see un on the ice?"

"Iss," the old man answered with perfect confidence.

"I 'low the Lard God A'mighty is kinder'n us thinks," murmured Job, his honest soul going out in prayer for those two reckless lovers, who, hand in hand, fared on through their purging-place to find, perhaps, a pardon at

its end.

The End





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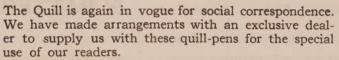
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